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The New PUNCH Library

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PRESENTING the cream of national humour contributed to "Punch" by our leading comic draughtsmen and humorous writers from the year 1900 to the present day

VOLUME XVIII

MR. PUNCH'S SPORTS & PASTIMES

WHAT OUR FATHERS HAVE TO PUT UP WITH

Frontis., Vol. XVIII.

MR. PUNCH'S SPORTS AND PASTIMES

With 276 Illustrations
& Frontispiece in Colours

ASIATIC SOCIETY OF BOMBAY
Presented by:-
Shri M. H. Latif
Date 22/11/73

By Arrangement with
THE PROPRIETORS OF "PUNCH"

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THE NEW "PUNCH" LIBRARY

TWENTY VOLUMES

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3. Mr. Punch in the Family Circle
4. Mr. Punch After Dinner
5. Mr. Punch's Children's Hour
6. Mr. Punch and the Arts
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8. Mr. Punch with Horse and Hound
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12. Mr. Punch's Country Manners
13. Mr. Punch in Holiday Mood
14. Mr. Punch on the Links
15. Mr. Punch in London Town
16. Mr. Punch on His Travels
17. Mr. Punch and Toby's Friends
18. Mr. Punch's Sports and Pastimes
19. Round the Year with Mr. Punch
20. Mr. Punch in War Time

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19 JAN 1974

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VARIETY, WHICH IS NOT ONLY THE SPICE OF LIFE BUT THE charm of Mr. Punch's pages, is made still more varied by the simple method on which our New Punch Library has been prepared. A glance at the list of its twenty volumes will show that some of them must be almost kaleidoscopic in the pattern of their contents while others conform to the promptings of a single theme. " Mr. Punch on His Travels " is one of the former, " Mr. Punch on the Links " one of the latter. But what does astonish is the immense range in the aspects of a subject such as Golf, or Hunting, that can be presented within what might be thought a restricted field of interest.

Probably no other volume is more various in its contents than this of " Mr. Punch's Sports and Pastimes." Representatively British, not only in the wide scope of the sports and pastimes with which it deals, but in the enthusiasm which Mr. Punch's gifted colleagues of the pen and pencil have brought to their description, a finer exposition of the humorous side of Sport could not be imagined.

Though golf, motoring, and hunting each has a special volume of the Library to itself, it was clear from the start that a volume dealing with sports other than these, and with indoor games and pastimes, would have to be included. It proves to be an important one, and as golfers, and motorists, and hunting folk seldom confine their sporting interests to the particular branch in which they are most active, they, in common with " the general reader," will gladly avail themselves of the entertainment which Mr. Punch's pages have yielded here on sports in general.

IT may be worth mentioning that the Editor in making his selections has not, in any of the composite volumes of the Library, followed a set plan of choosing so many representative pictures of Cricket, of Rugby, of Horse-racing, or Boxing or any of the other subjects that are grouped in one volume. His aim in making his selections has been to choose only such pictorial and literary items as appeal most strongly to his own sense of the humorous and the artistic. The proportionate results were to be as they might be: they have certainly been no part of his planning. It was almost inevitable that Cricket should predominate, but the extent to which Boxing came up in his selections was surprising. Here, perhaps, he did occasionally use a restraining hand, else the humours of the ring might have swamped those of other not less British sports which ought to find representation in such a collection.

Among other little surprises which the assembling of the pictures and letterpress have produced is the revelation of the age of the now popular sport of Channel Swimming. Who would have thought that so long ago as 1906 the sketch by Dudley Hardy in page 240 could have been as à propos as it might be any summer day in the present year of grace ? An even earlier example appears in page 46 of " Mr. Punch's Cavalcade."

The method of selection just mentioned has produced all sorts of interesting and curious results in the relative representation of Mr. Punch's famous artists. In the present volume practically all his well-known contributors find places, but it is noteworthy how the work of Mr. Frank Reynolds, with its manly, vigorous, and essentially comic line in character portrayal, exceeds all others. He is chiefly attracted to the humours of Cricket, but there is hardly a branch of sport which his genius for the comic has not enlivened and made vital for our amusement. Mr. Bert Thomas, Mr. Raven-Hill, the former with a quick eye for the humours of the prize ring, and Mr. Lewis Baumer, who is more at home in the luxurious sporting resorts of the Continent, Mr. Ridgewell, Mr. Thorpe, whose clean-cut line suggests that cleanness and crispness which we always associate with British sport, and Mr. E. H. Shepard, one of the most graceful draughtsmen that have ever come to the service of Mr. Punch, and many another familiar name that stands for wholesome entertainment, are all to be found at their liveliest in these pages.

WHETHER in prose, or verse, or picture, here is set out a veritable banquet of good things for sportsmen of all sorts—and we are all sportsmen of some sort, with individual tastes, even if it be but croquet or ping-pong that lures us. A sort of Olympic Games Banquet for sport-lovers and laughter-lovers, with the best of old sports, Mr. Punch himself, in the Chair.

The menu is a very varied one, and if it be said by anyone who sits down at Mr. Punch's table that there is a superabundance of side-dishes, of kickshaws, and the lighter products of a chef whose specialties are these rather than the "solids," why, you are not compelled to consume them all at a sitting, and they are so deftly concocted that they will "keep" indefinitely for your delectation again and again.

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MR. PUNCH'S SPORTS & PASTIMES

The Finer Points of Cricket

"IT'S 'im," said the visiting captain, proceeding to peel a bilious sweater from his tall frame after an anxious survey of the approaching batsmen. "Gimmy the ball. Knock my average to 'ell, will 'e, when the pitch is wet!"

The spoiler of averages was Pemberton, the local Jack Hobbs. It was borne in upon me that I had accepted rather light-heartedly the invitation to assist in umpiring the match between the village team and their rivals of Little Puddleford. There was in the atmosphere something that suggested that knotty points might come up for decision.

The tall captain started measuring off gigantic paces. "You get out to the fence, Bill," he said to a corpulent individual in a crushed hat with rolls of sweater up to his ears. "As like as not 'e will be took there."

Bill growled blood-thirstily, and the air was heavy with the unspoken desire that Pemberton might be killed early in the proceedings. The batsmen arrived just then, the fielders scattered and Pemberton settled himself for action. I shouted "Play!" The tall man, after scraping afresh at his mark, commenced a wild rush in the direction of the stumps. He reached the crease, whirled his arms like a runaway wind-mill, made a sudden clutching motion and bawled "Dammit!" in stentorian tones as the sphere slipped from his grasp, executed a series of diminishing bounds and, after rolling a few yards, stopped dead. Ten pairs of eyes gazed at it in horrified fascination.

"No Ball!" I called.

"Wot was wrong with that there delivery?" demanded the tall man.

"Nothing, except that it didn't reach its destination," I replied with mild facetiousness.

"And I didn't drag that foot across the crease?" An enormous extremity was advanced for my inspection.

"I don't think so. Something unusual happened; I don't just know what."

"And yet you give a No Ball!" The tall man glowed with righteous indignation. "It's a wide, that's wot it is."

Why does the Press photographer confine his efforts to first-class teams when the lesser lights provide such excellent material?

" It isn't," I argued. " It was going straight for the wicket if it had just kept on going."

" ' So 'igh over or so wide of the wicket that it's outuv the batsman's reach,' " quoted the tall man obstinately. " That ball was outuv 'is reach."

" You can't tell Dick nothing," said the wicket-keeper, distinguished by enormous pads and gloves, some white material and a snub nose. " Cricket's in the family. His cousin wouldnv been invited to play for Surrey Colts if 'e 'adn't been 'it on the Adam's apple."

The Little Puddleford team crowded round and eyed me with obvious distaste, while the visiting umpire, a replica of the tall man, said reproachfully, " If you 'ad ast me I coulduv told you."

" I don't doubt it," I replied. " But I couldn't give a wide till the ball reached the batsman. It hasn't reached him yet."

" Don't argue with the umpire," struck in the second batsman, whose job as local station-master lent authority to his tone. " It might as well be a No Ball as anything else. It's got to be something."

The captain's eyes bulged.

" And another thing," continued the station-master, " I want to protest

against them grey pants o' yours. They should be white. The ball can't be seen against them."

The captain, apparently bereft of speech, made incoherent noises, and a bald-headed long-stop called " Shame ! "

" It's red and green lights we should carry to please you," cried the man in the crushed hat. " Wot's 'e to do ? Take 'em off ? "

" He can if he wants to," rejoined the station-master, stung by this reference to his occupation.

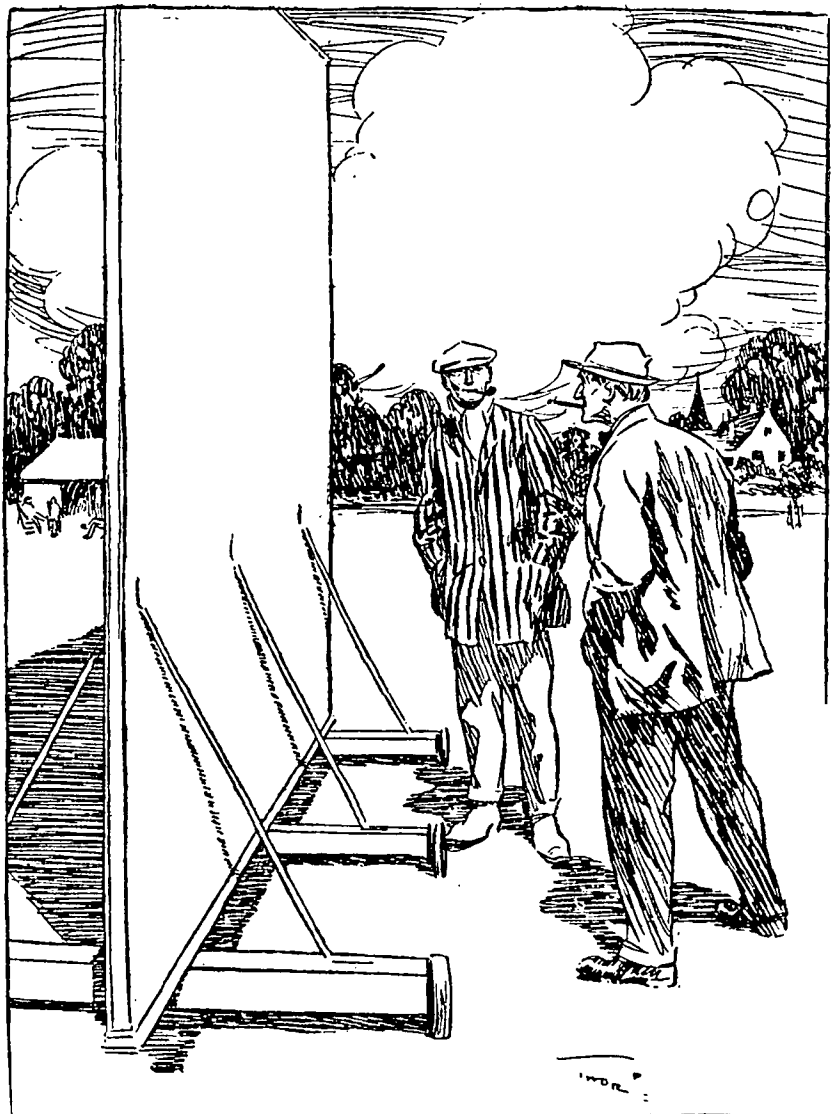
" I think we will waive the objection," I said soothingly.

" No man 'ere will wave them pants—no two men." The tall man spoke throatily, with dramatic motions of his arms. " They was white once, but got stained with moss and I 'ad 'em dyed."

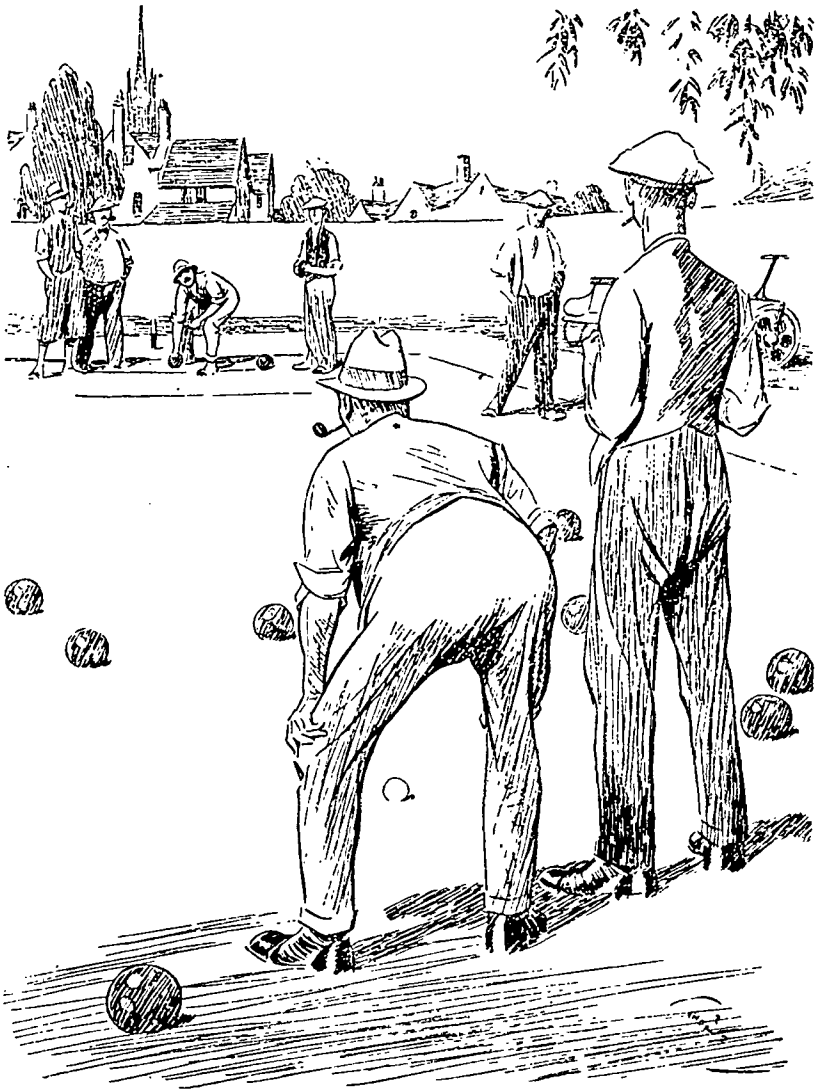
" They're all right," I assured him. " Keep them on by all means. You have just bowled a No Ball."

A hasty movement and a loud shout revealed the batsmen in the process of stealing a run. The tall man dashed like a cyclone in the direction of the ball, his fury seeming to disconcert Pemberton, who, from roaring " Come on ! " changed the instruction to " No—go back ! " and retreated hastily. The station-master, baulked after a flying start, made a loyal but unsuccessful

LOCAL FISHMONGER (*as exasperating batsman is at last disposed of*). " 'E's filleted!"



AMERICAN VISITOR (*having had bowling-screen explained*). "But, my *boy*, what a chance for an *advertisement* stunt!"



SKIP (*at very dud end*). "Best try an over-arm, Fred."

"After lunch Smith was unplayable."—Local Paper.

attempt to advance in opposite directions simultaneously, trod on the ball and collapsed among the tall bowler's legs.

A period of frightful confusion followed, a babel of suggestions arising from all quarters of the field. Finally the discomfited railway official managed to unravel himself and rushed madly towards his end, the tall man, from his knees in the middle of the pitch, making a valiant effort to throw down the abandoned wicket. The ball went wide of the mark and immediately Pemberton came careering down the pitch again calling for a run. But the station-master, mortified beyond utterance, declined to budge.

AT THE VARSITY MATCH

SHE (*after loud cheering*). "What's happened?"
HE. "Somebody's made 50."
SHE. "Where ever did the ball go to?"

"Other end!" shouted the tall man. From the outfield the ball came soaring through the air towards Pemberton's wicket. It reached it at the same time as Pemberton himself, landing with a resounding thump among the upper reaches of that stalwart's anatomy. A loud outburst of profanity greeted its arrival.

The tall man concealed a smile. "There's one thing," he said in a mollified tone, "it's reached 'im now anyway."

THE YOUNGSTER. "Do you ever bowl, Sir?"
THE OLD HAND. "Never—unless I'm captain."

The Fourth Change

WHEN the second hundred's showing
And triumphant batsmen look
As if both intended going
On for ever (like the brook),
When the skipper's perturbation
Is apparent to the view,
It is then in desperation
That he hands the ball to you.

Never yours the boundless rapture
Of the trundlers who begin
And achieve an easy capture
Ere the hitter's eye is in ;
Yours are only cricket's drab bits ;
Not for you the goodly bag
When it comes to potting rabbits
In a tail that doesn't wag.

For the spin you find effective
When disporting at the net
Mostly fails at an objective
Barred by batsmen fully set,
Who esteem themselves in clover,
Find you all that they desire,
Till (about your second over)
Comes the order to retire.

Or, if luck should look toward you
And a wicket you can claim,
Your commander won't afford you
Further chance to garner fame ;
When you part the coalition
You have done your bit (or whack)
And that masterly tactician
Promptly brings his first pair back.

"Is that fellow Timpkins any good?"
"Pretty useful. He's just bought a new six-seater!"

A man arrested in London last week was found to be wearing fourteen shirts. He is supposed to have been saving up for a flutter on the Derby.

The skeleton of a girl of four thousand years ago has been found at Goodwood in a sitting position. Perhaps she believed the bookie when he said he would be back later on.

According to a sports journal chess-players seldom die young. They would never finish a tournament if they did.

Dog-racing, dirt-track racing and darts are stated to be the three main sports that cause domestic trouble in humble homes. Commiseration, however, should not be withheld from the shove-ha'penny widow.

OUTRAGED BATSMAN. "Jarge, Oi do believe you 'm bowlin' deliberate at moi gammy leg."

JARGE (*feeling that something ought to be said*). "Why, Willyum, Oi thought they was both gammy."

The Prodigy

WHEN Johnson rang up to tell me he was bringing a man along " to play cricket on Saturday," I went straight to the point.

" Is he any good ? " I asked suspiciously.

Johnson seemed highly amused.

" My dear old Coot," he replied, " star performer—old College cricketer—once bowled two Blues in an over."

I am always rather doubtful about Johnson's star performers—his swans so often turn out to be ducks—but this certainly sounded good enough for village cricket, and in any case we of Little Dithering are always short of bowling. So I told Johnson to bring his friend along on Saturday.

When brought along on Saturday the friend was revealed to us as a tall and weedy young man with glasses.

" Would he like to go on first ? " I said quietly to Johnson. I had as usual lost the toss.

" I shouldn't put him on first if I were you," he advised. " He'd rattle 'em out too quickly, I expect ; spoil the game. Keep him up your sleeve, old boy."

I kept him up my sleeve with the result that the opening batsmen collected 50 for the first wicket. Every time I suggested putting on the star bowler Johnson demurred.

" Plenty of time," he said cheerfully.

At lunch the score was 103 for one wicket, so after lunch I took my courage in both hands and frankly ordered the star bowler to bowl. He seemed amused at the idea and then somewhat startled, but, in response to my urgent appeal that he should bowl, and bowl with all the cunning at his command, he finally consented to have a try.

" How do you like the field ?" I asked him.

" Charming, charming," he replied.

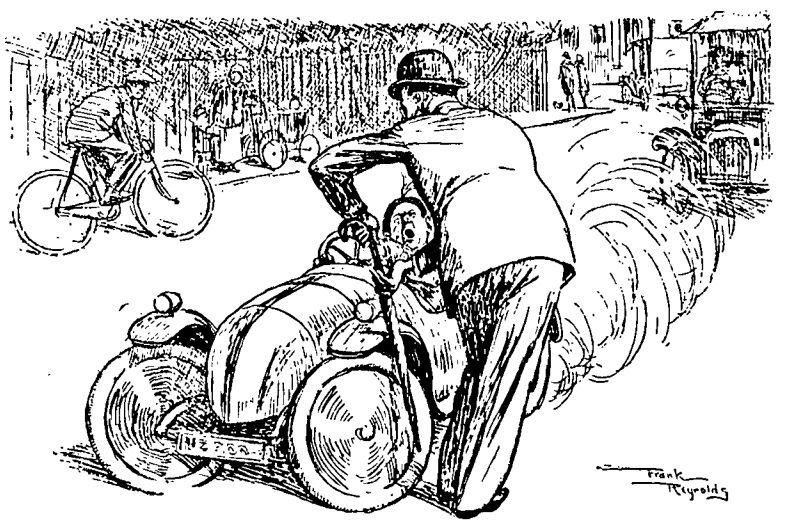
" I mean," I said, " how would you like them placed ?"

He gave me a friendly smile.

" Oh, I see," he rejoined. " I don't know that it matters much. Leave them as they are."

" See some fun now," Johnson whispered to me.

We did see some fun. The star bowler after a stately run delivered three



STUDY OF AN OLD CRICKETER GLANCING A SMALL CAR TO LEG

"Pity your boy hit his wicket."
"Ralph was always a passionate child."

slow wides. He was then no-balled twice and subsequently delivered six highish full-tosses to leg which were suitably dealt with by the batsmen. His first over cost us 29 runs and I was for taking him off.

" No, no," said Johnson. " Wait till he finds his length."

The star bowler's next over only cost 24.

" He's not coming off to-day," Johnson declared.

" Oh, yes, he is," I returned, " he's coming off now."

We lost the match.

Resolved to get to the bottom of the matter I tackled the friend in the pavilion afterwards as he was sipping gently at a ginger-beer.

" I hear," I said pleasantly, " that you once bowled two Blues in an over."

He gave me another friendly smile.

" Yes," he replied, " I did once. It was when I was up at the 'Varsity. We had a sort of rag game and I went on to bowl. One of them was a running Blue and the other one was President of the Boat Club."

WOON

BATSMAN (*to importunate wicket-keeper*). "You 're wasted 'ere—you ought to be appealin' on be'alf of some charity."

Her Ladyship Kicks Off

I STOOD in Lady Wrackenham's imposing hall (where the butler, after a rather penetrating glance, had left me) surrounded by antlers and barometers and assegais and umbrellas and stuffed pike and goloshes and other trophies of the chase. From within some noble apartment I could hear Lady Wrackenham (pronounced " Ram," you remember ?) cry, " Who ? Who ? " with well-bred petulance in response to the announcement of my modest name. Then a door was wrenched open and Lady Wrackenham was surging towards me.

" Oh, it's you," she said, masking her enthusiasm. " Well, what is it ? "

I cleared my throat. Lady Wrackenham has that effect upon me ; she is, if I may say so without discourtesy, a little overwhelming ; very large and blonde and with a figure which is far-flung in both directions.

" I—I come straight from the Cottage Hospital, Lady Wrackenham," I said huskily, for my throat was not yet absolutely clear.

Her ladyship, like Herminius in the " Lay," started back. For one of her massive proportions she displayed surprising agility.

" As a delegate—a delegate from the Committee," I hastened to assure her. " In no sense of the word as a patient. Nothing contagious or infectious."

Her ladyship breathed her relief. These old families have good lungs. Her ladyship's relief gently ruffled my hair.

" Oh," she said. " Well, what can I do for you ? "

I fumbled for words. All the way down to the Grange I had kept telling

THE DAY OF WOMAN'S STRENGTH: A MAYORESS KICKS OFF

ICE-RINK CRISES

FIRST LIMPET. "Would you mind passing round me, Madam? I'm only a beginner."

SECOND LIMPET. "I'm afraid I must ask you to pass round me, Sir; I haven't even begun."

myself that simple faith was infinitely preferable to Norman blood and that rank was but the guinea's stamp and that we were all equal in the sight of Heaven; but in the presence of Lady Wrackenham doubts crowded in upon me. I am no snob, but——

"Bless the man!" cried her ladyship with bluff heartiness. "Can't he speak?"

"We—we want you to—to kick off," I blurted.

"Kick off?" she echoed, glaring about her as though in search of a victim and finally allowing her eyes to rest upon me. "Kick who off?"

I laughed a little convulsively at her quaint misconception and then in a sudden rush of words explained matters. The Hospital Committee, desirous this year of making the annual football match between the Reds and the Stripes an outstanding success (for the gate-money went to the Hospital) had conceived the bold project of asking Lady Wrackenham to open the match with a magnificent Society gesture.

"Just a tap with your foot on the ball—that's all," I pleaded.

Lady Wrackenham laughed sturdily. Delicately nurtured though she was,

VOICE FROM OTHER SIDE OF WALL. "Please, Sir, would you mind kicking my ball over?"

RUGBY PLAYER (*to fiancée at half-time*). "Phyllis, I think you know Johnson?"
PHYLLIS. "Do I?"

and wholly unused to the mimic warfare of the football field, she laughed sturdily. Clearly the idea had made a favourable impression upon her aristocratic mind. To my slight embarrassment she straightway shot forth her right leg—a noble limb indeed, and probably inherited from a long line of Viking ancestors.

" When *I* kick," she said, " I kick *hard*. All right. Tell 'em I'll do it."

I made her a little grateful—and, I fancy, graceful—speech of thanks. Or, rather, I started to make it, but, finding myself alone, I retired in some confusion.

It was regrettable that through the error of a careless printer the poster should have announced that " LADY WRUCKENHAM WILL KICK OFF AT 2.30 PRECISELY," implying that her ladyship's name was pronounced " Rum " (which is unthinkable) ; but this did not seem to affect the gate, which was a record one. The field was packed with supporters of Red and Stripes. There was a band and a referee and an ambulance with stretchers, for such things, you know, must be after a famous victory, even in the cause of charity.

I am anything but a snob, but I confess that it was the proudest moment of my life when, amidst the ringing cheers of the populace, I escorted Lady Wrackenham on to the field of play at the advertised time. She wore a

THE GIRL. "Pity there isn't a jazz-band."
HER PARTNER. "Well, anyhow, it's a jolly floor."

"Well, even if 'e did cost twelve thousand, 'e doesn't know 'ow to pass the ball to the wing."

"Don't talk silly. D' ye expect 'im to pass the ball to a man wot only cost twelve 'undred?"

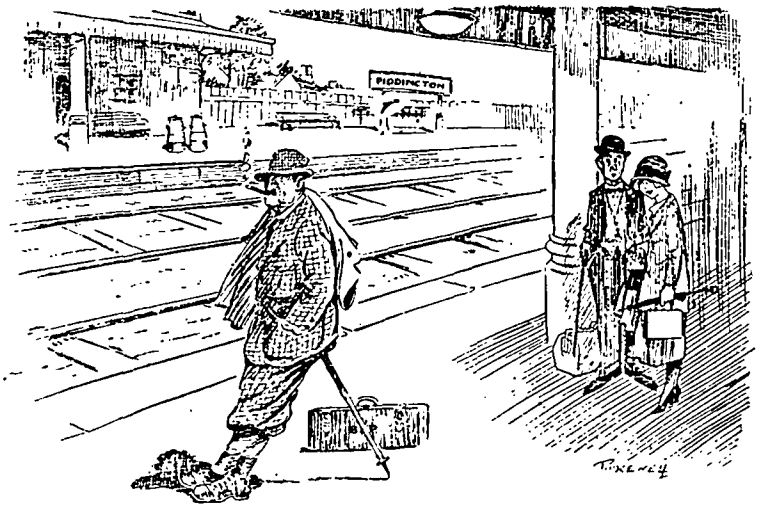
suberb full-length sable coat, a bowler hat with a black elastic attachment beneath her subsidiary chin, and serviceable—indeed almost formidable—boots. For myself, I was dressed without ostentation in my ordinary blue serge—quiet but good.

We reached mid-field. Her ladyship, with an absence of affectation which only the bluest of blood can impart, frankly hitched up her garments so as to give her lower extremities full freedom. Thus girt about, flanked by the Reds and faced by the Stripes, she regarded the ball intently from her vantage ground some few yards away. The referee (a good fellow, but not, I think, quite a gentleman, or he would not have been staring so markedly at her ladyship's contours) popped the whistle into his smirking mouth.

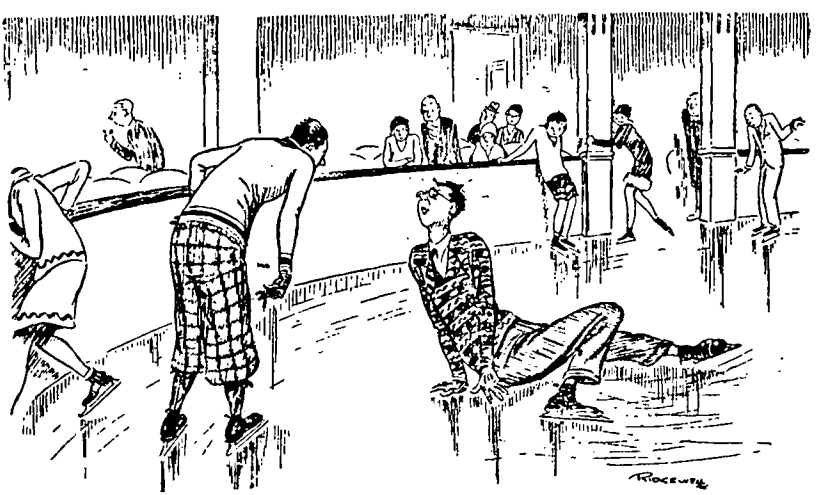
" Ready ? " he asked. " Directly I whistle you kick."

Her ladyship nodded grimly : there was purpose in her eye. I simply bowed : there was reproof (to the referee) in mine.

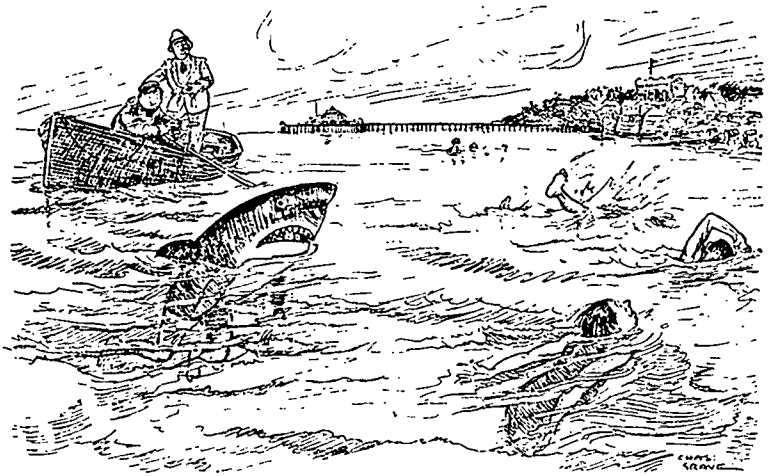
And then, just as he released a shrill blast, the stupid egg-shaped football must needs roll over. Ever ready in an emergency I sprang forward and, instantly assuming a frog-like squatting posture with my back to her ladyship, I made to restore the leather to its correct position. But Lady Wrackenham



"What 's 'e sittin' on, Bert?"
"Why, that 's one o' them things they use for shootin'."
"My word! 'e wouldn't 'arf jump if it went off!"



FRIEND. "Hullo, old chap! Had another tumble?"
NOVICE. "I don't think so, old man. So far as I remember, this is the same one."



THE SEARCH FOR OLYMPIC TALENT

An ex-swimming champion, accompanied by a friend for timing, disguises himself as a shark at a popular seaside resort.

MAGISTRATE. "Does this man do anything for a living?"
CONSTABLE. "Yes, your worship; he's a tipster."
ACCUSED. "No, I ain't. I'm a turf selectionist."

OUR VILLAGE CYNIC (*as home player is tripped up and fouled*). "Go on—kick 'im agen—'e's still breathing."

was already in punctual motion and either could not check her impetus or imagined up to the last moment that I would evade it. . . .

I have hinted that her boots were formidable; one of them—the right one, I assumed—struck my neat blue serge where my crouching posture made it tightest. The pain was intense. But I am happy to say that before losing consciousness I was able to mumble my hope that her ladyship had not permanently injured her foot.

When, a few days later, I was allowed to leave the Cottage Hospital in a bath-chair, my sole anxiety naturally was to know whether Lady Wrackenham was offended with me. I chanced to meet her on the road. She was limping slightly. Would she recognise me, or had I affronted her irretrievably? I felt myself paling with suspense.

She stopped. My bath-chair paused tentatively. For a pregnant minute she stared at me. Then—— well, if she were in a lower walk of life I should say she guffawed. I felt myself slowly unpaling. She was a greater lady than even I had deemed. She was big enough to forgive.

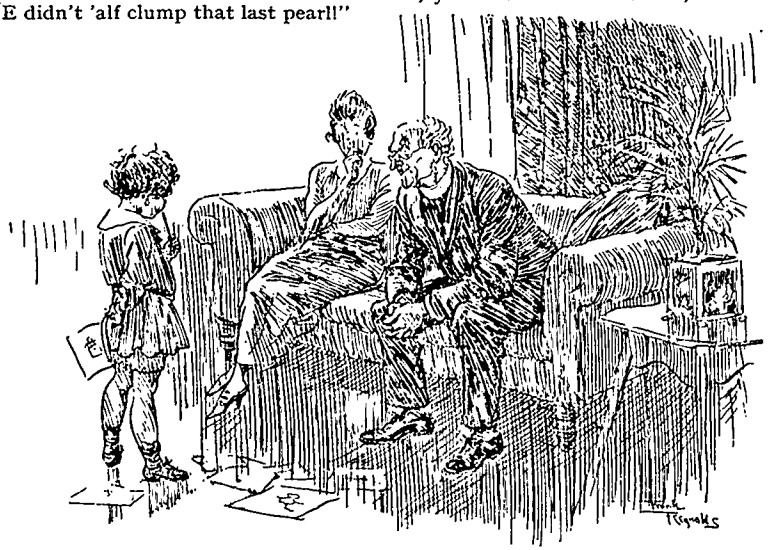
" I warned you I should kick hard," she laughed infectiously; " and I can never be too thankful that I wasn't wearing tennis shoes."

SECOND. "Say, Kid, I got an idea. Next time 'e 'its yer, 'it 'im back."

THE GUIDE. "Take it easy, Sir, and keep your strength for the difficult part."

The lady who wanted to know if there were any nice walks in the neighbourhood.

CRACK BOWLER (*indignantly*). "I'm sick of bowling to this feller. Talk about pearls before swine——" CAPTAIN. "Well, you'd better take a rest, Charlie. 'E didn't 'alf clump that last pearl!"



VISITOR. "Well, my little man, can you draw?" SMALL BOY. "Yes."
VISITOR. "And what can you draw? Pigs, houses, pussy-cats, horses—eh?"
SMALL BOY. "I don't fink I can draw a horse, but daddy can. He drew Royal Lancer in the office sweep."

CLUB NOTES

"Crescent United were unfortunate in losing to Paradise Alley owing to the unavoidable absence of their custodian at a critical moment in the game."

The "Golden Goalie" Writes for Us

(With acknowledgments in the proper quarter)

TO-DAY, as announced for the last three weeks, we are privileged to publish the first vivid and enthralling article by Sandy McToshery, the World's Greatest Goalie. His rise to fame has been meteoric. Born near Glasgow in 1909, he played as a boy for St. Columba's Eclectic. For the laughable fee of six oranges and a packet of cigarettes he was transferred to the McTavish Institute F.C. He remained with them for some years, but in 1928 signed professional forms for a Scottish League team, although wisely retaining his position in a fish-and-chips establishment.

But his fame as an invincible guardian of the citadel was soon bruited south of the Tweed. Several of our cleverest managers fought to secure his services—that notorious fracas on Euston platform will not be forgotten—and eventually he was transferred to Nottingham Nomads. He kept for them for three months, when they succumbed to a bid of seven thousand pounds by Everton Eagles, with whom he remained until March, '29, when Newcastle Cannies, in grave danger of descent to Division II., made the then stupendous bid of fourteen thousand guineas, and Everton reluctantly parted with Sandy.

RATS!

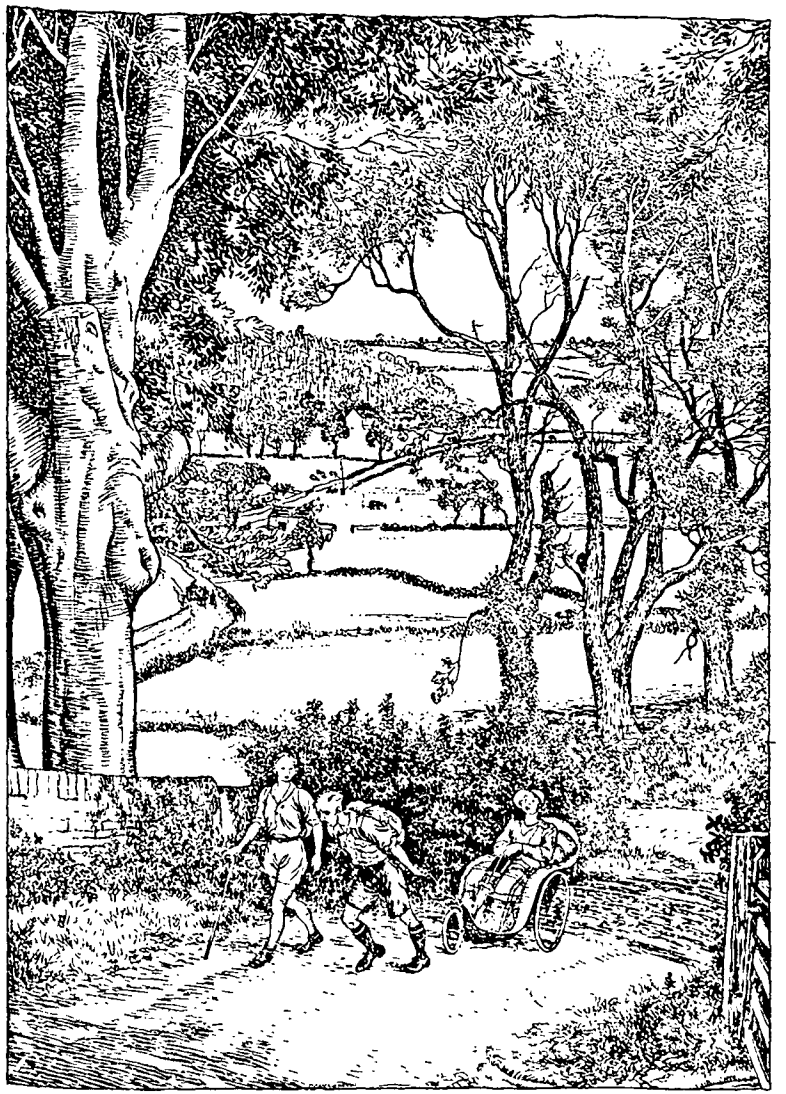
ALGY. "Oh, I say! Fancy fishin' with a beastly squirrel! What?"

Secret history records that Chelsea Hotboots sent one of their shrewdest buyers up to Newcastle that summer with virtually a blank cheque, but he failed to secure Sandy. So that the news, published exclusively by this paper, that Woolwich Villa had arranged his transfer at a world's record fee of twenty thousand pounds came as a stupendous thrill to the vast football public. His performances for the "Howitzers" have been admired this season by hundreds of thousands; his words will be read by millions (see certified Net Sales).

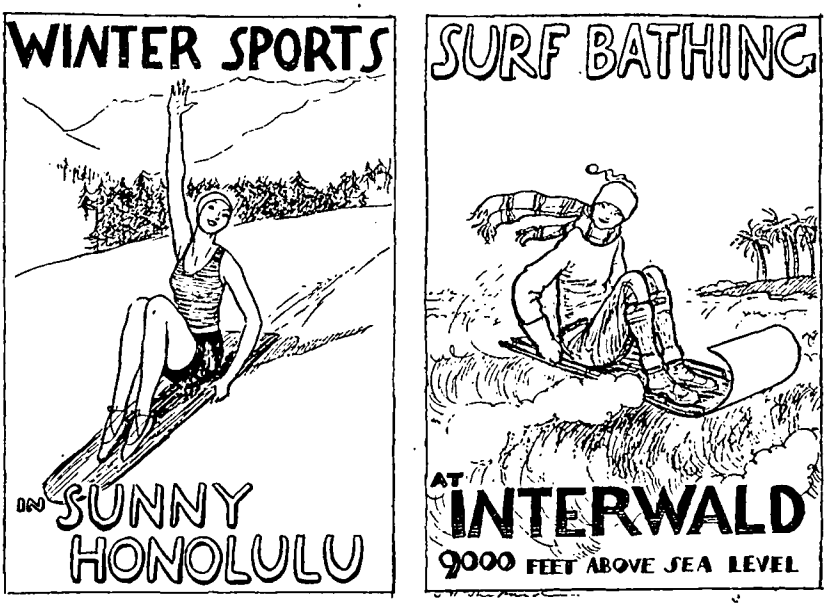
"HOME AT LAST"

BY ALEXANDER MCTOSHERY

It is with considerable pride that I pen my first article for this great paper and thus get into closer touch with my dear and kind public. It has been wisely said that there are three essentials to the making of a great modern footballer—modesty, skill with the pen and loyalty to his club. Even though I am rightly called the "Greatest Goalie on Earth," I remain humble. A greater may arise, though I doubt it. My skill with the pen is proved by this article. If I could not write, would it appear here? But love for my club—ah, that is everything to me. I played for Newcastle; I was a fervid Novocastrian. When at Everton, I trained on toffee; and all my club-mates were



HIS WIFE'S MOTHER;
Or, what our hikers have to put up with.



MR. PUNCH'S PUZZLE PICTURES
What is wrong with these posters?

my brothers. I have had so many brothers. But—and this is so wonderful—I have never loved a club so much as Woolwich Villa. I feel that I am home at last. My club-mates are almost sisters to me. If I could see my club win the Cup, I would almost forgo my benefit.

I think I have kept faith with my public. It beats me how I came to let that one through at Birmingham. I know I ought to have stopped it. I cried that night.

But that has been my only mistake in the last two seasons. When the sphere was netted off my head at Nottingham last January (it will be remembered that it was " Twisty " Blake who put in the pile-driving shot) I could easily have put it behind if I had tried to. But " Twisty " and I had been club-mates and almost blood-brothers for a full half-season. I knew how much it would mean to " Twisty " (whose transfer value had been falling) to score—so keeping faith with *his* public. And, after all, we were seven goals up.

Look out for another enthralling article by the " Golden Goalie " next week.

"Shall we ask that new member to make up the four?"
"I shouldn't. He can't be much of a player—he's only got three racquets."

ACHTUNG!
One of the minor dangers of the Alps.

ROWING MAN. "Charming girl, your cousin. Such Eton eyes; such Leander cheeks."

Rugger

I AM radiant, my friends, as the sun in a midsummer sky,
I am glad as a wasp in a bounty of strawberry jam,
For on Saturday next I shall soar like a bird, I shall fly—
As a matter of fact I shall go by South-Eastern or tram—
In a mood of most excellent cheer
To a suburb conveniently near,
Where I hope to take part in my first game of Rugger this year.

It is not, be it said—be it candidly owned, it is not—
In the *rôle* of an active performer; time was when I shone
(To a certain extent) and was rather (I think) on the spot;
But, for reasons sufficiently obvious, now I look on.
I shall sit in the stand and look wise,
While emitting encouraging cries
Or censorious comment, perhaps, as occasion may rise.

Oh, 'tis joy to engage in the hunt of that noblest of eggs,
In the air, on the ground, in the hand, at the toe or the heel,
When the half or three-quarter's brought down with a crash by the legs
Or evasively dodges and slithers about like an eel,
And the forwards, all passion and fire,
Tear each other to shreds and perspire,
Or subside, like a handful of worms, in the neighbourly mire.

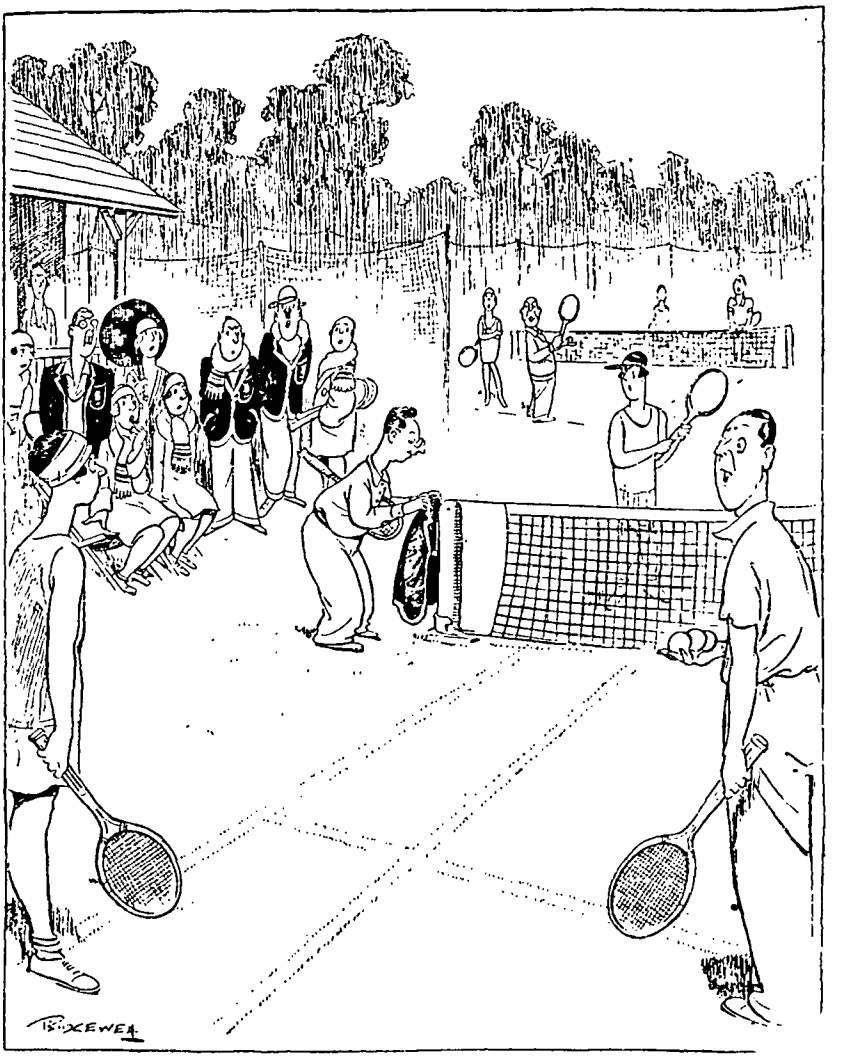
And the things that go wrong—oh, the dire disproportionate things—
The offences of kick and of collar; the sins of the pack,
Of the halves that hold on, of the centres' neglect of the wings;
The transgression, the tragic and lonely remorse of the back.
They are dreadful; and yet in a way,
By assuming a mien of dismay,
We can hint that we rose above that sort of thing in our day.

But reaction succeeds and the crimes of the present recall
Ev'ry act, ev'ry moment of old when we also were weak;
When we suffered, perhaps, from the infamous shape of the ball,
With a menacing pack roaring up like a wave in a creek;
Unforgettable lapses, alas!
When a man with a stomach of brass
Would be conscious of nothing but looking a blithering ass.

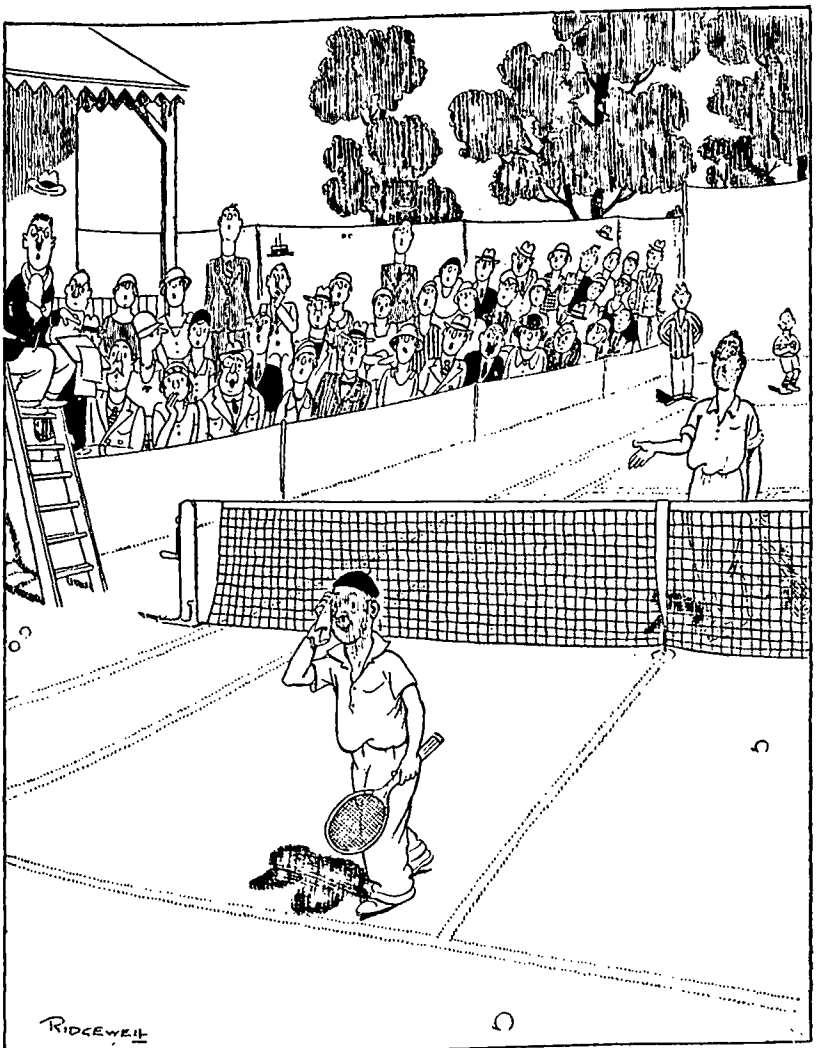
So the game rushes on with a decent and amiable heat
Till the whistle rings peace from a weary but whole referee,
And I rise, feeling stiff in the knees, from a beast of a seat
And depart from the field with the pleasant intention of tea,
And the noble ambition in view
Of embarking on Rugger anew
When my next incarnation has come—and to try for my blue.

DUM-DUM

LADY (*entering Bookmaker's office*). "I see from the Directory that you are a Turf specialist. Would you be so good as to tell me what to put on my lawn to kill the dandelions?"



THE NEW MEMBER HANGS HIS COAT ON THE NET POST



TENSE MOMENTS IN SUBURBIA
The loser forgets to shake hands.

"Look at his disgraceful tennis-shirt! Fellah's a dashed nudist."

The Ladies' Doubles

THERE were four of us talking together in front of the pavilion at the tennis club. George Hilton, who is probably the laziest man in the club, was sprawling indolently in a deck-chair, while Mrs. Hilton, Miss Mostyn and I stood round expatiating on the sinfulness of sloth on a fine Saturday afternoon.

" You made me join this club because you thought I needed exercise," I pointed out, " and you ought to see that I get it."

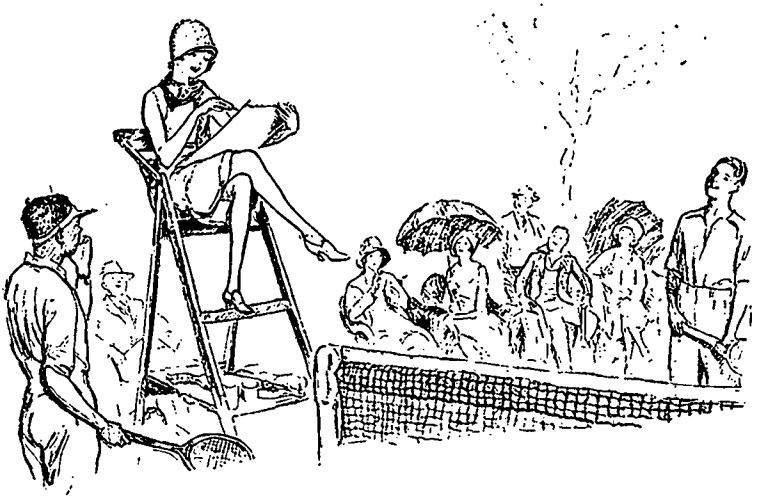
" Very well," he said with an air of martyrdom, " I will join you in a mixed double. After all," he added, addressing himself to the two ladies, " we old members ought to encourage these keen novices."

" Could you put up with me as a partner ? " I asked Miss Mostyn.

Before she could reply, Cobb, who is our Tournament Secretary, emerged from the pavilion with a box of new balls.

" Oh, Miss Mostyn," he said, " are you ready to play off the first round of the Ladies' Doubles ? "

" I'm quite ready," said Miss Mostyn. She turned to me : " You don't mind, do you ? We might play our mixed after tea."



FAIR UMPIRE (*something of a partisan, announcing score at tournament*). "Game to Mr. Jones, who now leads by four games to one in the second set, having won the first and being likely to win the second."

FAIR PLAYER (*whose partner is bearing the brunt of a gruelling set*). "Yours, partner."

BEAGLING

OLD-FASHIONED YOUNG MAN. "You go on, Miss James, I'll—er—turn my back."

YOUNG WOMAN. "Don't be such a mutt. You'll have to give me a boost over."

I registered philosophical resignation.

" Now what about an umpire ? " said Cobb persuasively, addressing the club at large. There was an awkward pause. People who happened to be near a door slipped quietly into the pavilion. Others less favourably situated hastily extemporised scratch fours and made for the more distant courts. George was restrained from bolting only by the fact that Cobb was looking straight at him.

" Personally," said George, " I should love the job, only I'm due to play Hawkins in the Handicap at four o'clock. But don't you worry, Cobb ; I'll find you an umpire."

" Where are you going to find the umpire ? " I inquired suspiciously.

" Here," said George, patting my shoulder benevolently ; " you shall have the privilege."

" You were always too good to me," I murmured.

" Think of the popularity you will achieve by merely sitting still," he went on. " All the people who might have been in your place will love you like a brother."

" Is all this true ? " I asked Miss Mostyn.

UMPIRE. "'Ow do you bowl, Sir?"
OUR LAST HOPE. "Like Larwood."

HUSBAND. "I thought you said they had a decent court here."
WIFE. "I simply said it was like a billiard-table, and if anything it's larger."

" A willingness to umpire," she replied, " is certainly a short cut to popularity."

" As a special favour," added George, " I will lend you my big blanket-coat. You will look so like a real umpire that nobody will notice the difference."

" Hand it over," I said. " I never could resist flattery."

With George's assistance I clambered into the umpire's chair, and by the time I had settled myself Mrs. Cobb, who partnered Miss Mostyn, had won the toss.

" We'll take service," she announced. Their opponents, Miss Hawkins and Mrs. Strange, moved away to the pavilion end. I leaned back and surveyed the court. Mrs. Cobb retired to her base-line and gazed at me intently ; all four of them gazed at me intently. There was a dramatic hush, and then I leaned over and whispered to George—

" Is there a smut on my nose ? "

" No," said George ; " you look a perfect little picture."

" Then why this delay ? " I inquired. " Am I expected to give a short address from the chair ? "

" I think," said George confidentially, " that if you just say ' Play ' in a loud clear voice it will meet the case."

" Play ! " I said in a loud clear voice.

KEEN DEVOTEE AT CRICKET-MATCH. "Hang it all; why can't they do without a tea interval?"

FIRST PLAYER. "How ought we to divide? I'm pretty feeble."
SECOND DITTO. "I expect you're a lot better than I am."
THIRD DITTO. "I'm hopelessly rotten."
FOURTH DITTO (*ignoring the conventions*). "I'm rather hot stuff. Now let's start over again."

Mrs. Cobb served. Mrs. Strange placed her return accurately down Miss Mostyn's side-line. Miss Mostyn replied with a deep lob to the far corner, and then the four of them settled down to a quiet driving competition. There was no unseemly sprinting to the net, no vulgar haste. All four belonged to the pre-Lenglen school and held that a woman's place was on the base-line. None of them looked like making a mistake for hours. A bee buzzed drowsily round my head. . . .

Presently Mrs. Strange mis-hit, and found the net. I woke up with a start.

" Fifteen love," prompted George.

" Fifteen love," I echoed.

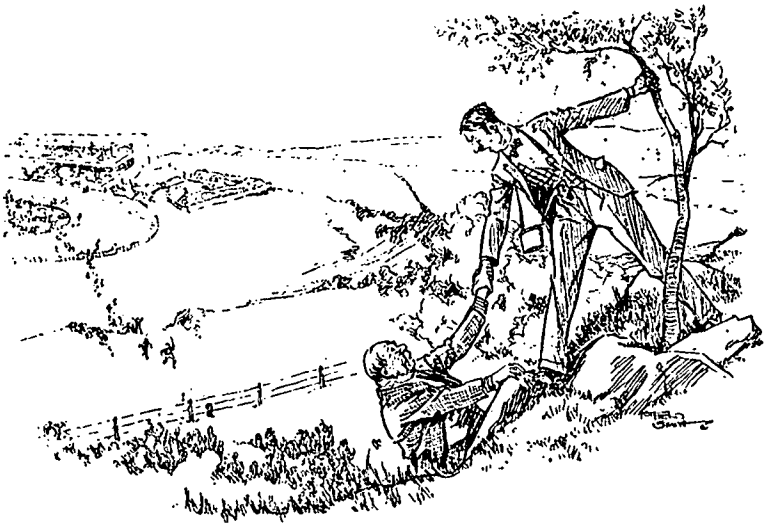
Mrs. Cobb served. Miss Hawkins placed her return accurately down Miss Mostyn's side-line. Miss Mostyn replied with a deep lob. The game went on.

At the end of what seemed about an hour Miss Mostyn and Mrs. Cobb won a game. While they were changing ends I said to George : " How long are we allowed for this round ? "

" Until to-day fortnight," he replied.

" We shall never do it," I said.

" They are steady, aren't they ? " he remarked, and then, " I must fade



STOUT WELSHER. " 'Ere, I left 'arf me coat on that barb-wire!"
PARTNER. "Aw, come on and don't worry about that."
STOUT WELSHER. "Yes, but it was the 'arf with the money in the pocket."

OUR VICAR. "Are you ready?"
OUR CURATE (*to his team*). "Now, men, *forward* be our watchword!"

UMPIRE (*recruited in an emergency for our local tennis tournament*). "Now I hope you won't have any long rallies. They always make me forget the score."

BIG-GAME HUNTER. "Now, this——"

away now ; I 'm due to play Hawkins at four. I 'll ask Ethel to send you out some tea."

The game went on indefinitely, broken only by a short armistice while Miss Mostyn tidied her hair. I was aroused from a trance-like condition by the arrival of Mrs. Hilton with a cup of tea and a plate of chromatic cakes.

" How are you getting on ? " she asked, " and what is the score ? I had to tear myself away half-an-hour ago to pour out tea."

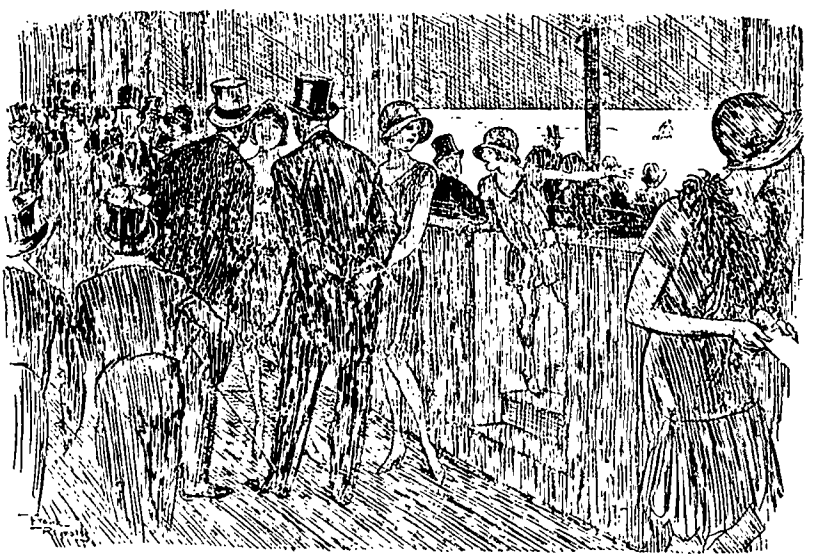
" You must have missed at least two points," I said. " Mrs. Strange is getting a little wild on her back-hand ; she broke down at the twenty-seventh return just now. The point was gone, one might say, before she had time to look round. The score is now five—four in favour of the Mostyn-Cobb combination."

" Would you like any more tea ? "

" No, thank you, kind lady. If my people ever ask after me, tell them I am well and happy. Why, here comes George with more buns."

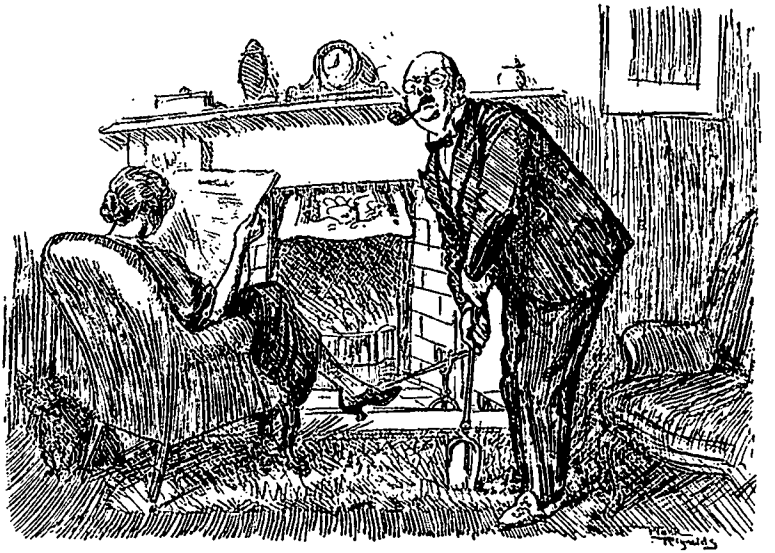
" Hullo, Frankie," said George. " Still living at the old place, I see." He looked me over critically. " He's getting awfully stout, isn't he, Ethel ? You don't take enough exercise, old man."

" No ? " I said coldly.



OUR SOCIAL FUNCTIONS

SMALL GIRL (*at Eton and Harrow match*). "Mummy, look! there's some boys playing cricket out there!"



WHAT OUR WIVES HAVE TO PUT UP WITH

CRICKET ENTHUSIAST. "Go on reading about the Australians, dear."

The game went on. Ours was now the only court occupied. I heard the rattle of tea-cups and the loud laughter of irresponsible idlers who had nothing better to do than to loiter about drinking tea. Presently the courts filled again and the shadows began to lengthen. Still the game went on. The score crept up to set all and two games all in the third and final set.

By that time we had quite a large gallery, composed of people who had finished play for the day. George again stationed himself at the foot of my chair. At five games all in the third set, I leaned over to him.

"George," I said, "if anything happens to me I should like you to have my birds' eggs and the stuffed owl."

"Don't talk like that, old man," he said in a broken voice, and then, more brightly, "Oh, good one, Mrs. Cobb!"

He didn't care.

* * * * * * *

Late that evening I hobbled out of the dressing-room and along the dusky verandah, looking for my pipe. There I met Miss Mostyn.

"I was just thinking of you," I began.

"How thrilling!" she said. "Tell me some more."

"It was at a tennis club, a long, long time ago," I went on, "that somebody very like you told me that a willingness to umpire was a short cut to popularity. I think 'short' was the word she used."

LADY (*with trunk*). "I want this put on the three-thirty."
PORTER (*with sporting paper*). "I wouldn't if I was you. It's a very open race."

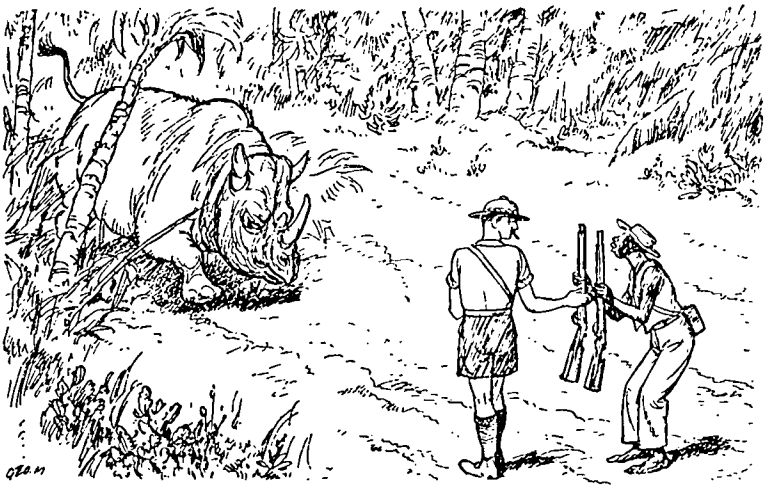
PUNTER'S WIFE (*soothingly*). "No horse could have tried harder to win, Arthur. He even got rid of his jockey."

SPECTATRESS (*seeing players wearing ear-guards*). "Dear me! How can they listen-in while they are playing?"

FOOTBALL ENTHUSIAST. "By Jove! that's a promising three-quarters."
STOCKBROKER (*day-dreaming*). "Yes—shouldn't be surprised to see him go to seven-eighths."

"I think Rugby is such a *messy* game. Couldn't you play it on a hard-court?"

TAILOR (*measuring old running man*). "If I may say so, Sir, you don't breast the tape in the same place you used to."



"Thank you, Jenkinson. You may go now."

A Beat for Tiger

"HERE is your post," announced Porterhouse. "If I were you I should lie on that rock, looking this way. Then you can pot him when he's past you. The shikari says he's bound to come this way."

"Don't you think that rock is rather low?" I ventured. "I understand that a tiger can leap twenty feet with ease."

"Don't worry," replied Porterhouse. "Your smell will keep him away."

This seemed an indelicate remark, but I reflected that tiger-hunters were often indelicate people and held my peace.

"Keep quite still," went on Porterhouse in his C.O. manner, "and don't shoot till the brute's passed you, or he'll turn back and raise hell among the beaters. Don't smoke, or he'll wind it and you won't get a shot."

"Are you going to leave me now?" I asked.

"Yes, I am taking a post further up the line; but he's pretty certain to break here. If you hear a single shot, keep still and look out."

"And if I hear nothing do I stay here all day?"

"Wait till the beaters get through; and mind, don't fire at anything but tiger."

A few moments later I was left alone on the rock with a particularly degenerate-looking Bhil who did not understand any spoken language. The rock had been carelessly left in the sun and it burnt me at every point of

contact. The rifle weighed a ton and I was beastly thirsty; wanted a smoke too.

I put all the clothes I could find between my—between me and the rock, but it was of no avail. The heat from below was even greater than that from the sun. I got up and walked about to find a cooler rock. Useless proceeding; all the rocks were white-hot.

"A rock is better than a tree," Porterhouse had declared; "your shot is not baulked by leaves and twigs or by difficulty in aiming."

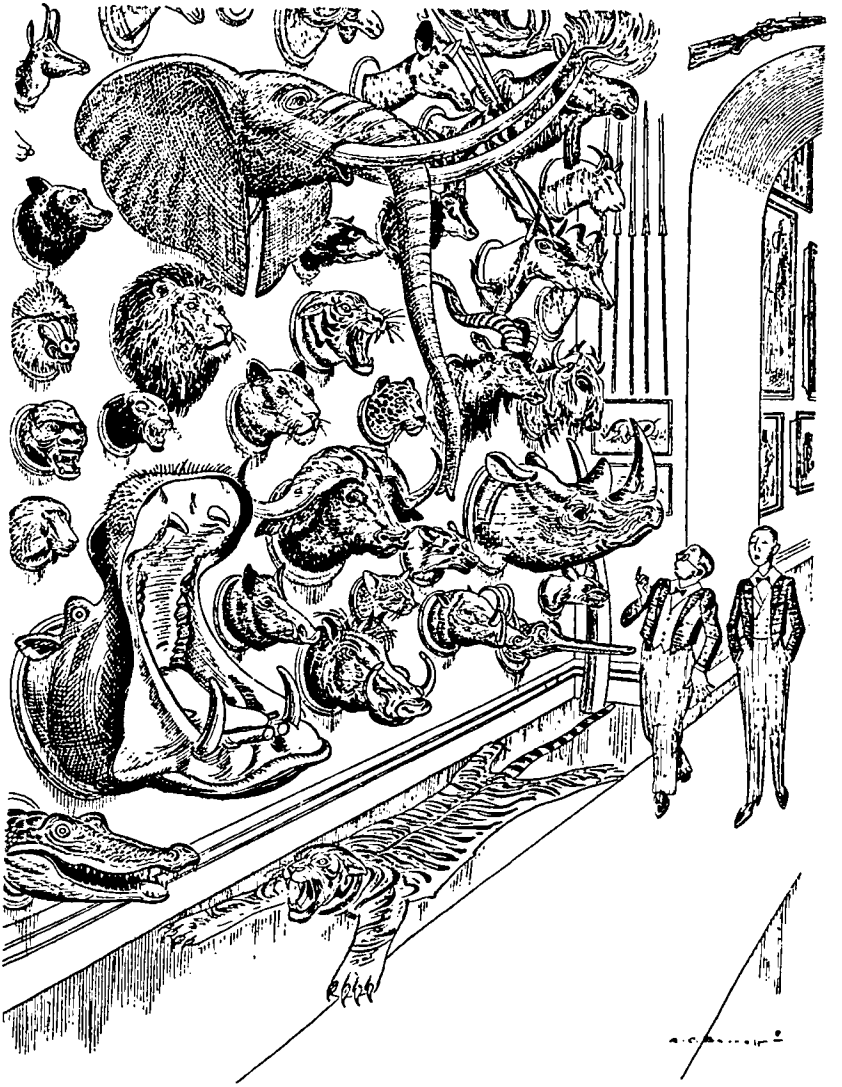
A faint noise in the distance announced that the beat had begun. Here was I on the ground, at the mercy of any tiger that happened to come along. I made for the nearest tree at a hand-gallop. I was two branches up before I dared look down. "Safe so far," I reflected; "that tiger will require good eyesight to see me here."

"Tigers have been known to climb trees," Porterhouse had said. Well, it would take a tiger a good time to climb up to my seat, and if he tried it I would fill him up with expanding bullets at ranges varying from three yards to one yard. He would look very silly indeed—— Help! What was that?

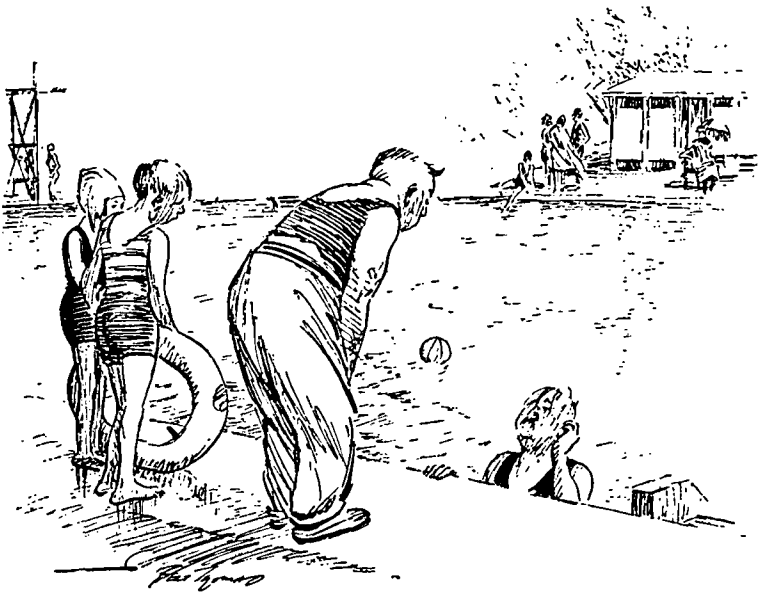
A rustling in the tree just above my head. The brute had climbed up

OLD LADY (*at Victoria Station*). "Oh, porter, has there been a railway accident?"
PORTER. "Accident! No, lady. They've just come back from enjoyin' themselves at the winter sports."

"My dear, look!—a real tramp. How too positively romantic!"



"Coo! Where did you get all these?"
"Oh, at one time the old man was keen on big-game hunting or something."



INSTRUCTOR. "That's better, Sir; you ain't swallerin' so much water—doing more to the gallon, so to speak."

the other side and was waiting to pounce on me. Now for a courageous last stand, defending myself, if necessary, with the butt of my rifle.

In my hurried ascent I had completely forgotten my rifle, which I had loaded early so as not to be caught napping. I now observed it in the distance, still leaning against the rock. I was unarmed, and that dreadful rustling continued. I took courage and peered upwards, expecting to get a close-up of the tiger's fangs.

All I saw was a dirty brown foot waving in the air, the foot of my Bhil, who had beaten me up the tree by several yards.

I was greatly relieved and made signs to the creature to bring the rifle. After listening intently for some moments he shinned down the tree and got the rifle, which he then proceeded to pass up to me, muzzle foremost, with his hand on the stock very close to the trigger.

Dreadful sensations overpowered me. The fool was holding the thing up as high as he could reach and I was groping as low as I could reach, all the time moving to and fro to avoid the pointing muzzle and growing more and more purple in my down-hanging face. I spoke to him pretty stiffly about

"Come on, Sir. It won't hurt with the gloves on."
"I know that. But I'm awfully ticklish."

FIRST SPORTSMAN. " 'Ow much did that bass weigh you caught on Wednesday?"
SECOND SPORTSMAN (*guardedly*). "Same as it weighed when I told yer before. It ain't shrunk."

his intelligence and upbringing, but he quietly persisted in drawing a bead on me.

Finally I waved him aside and slipped down the tree. I did not breathe freely until I had grabbed the rifle and slipped out the cartridges.

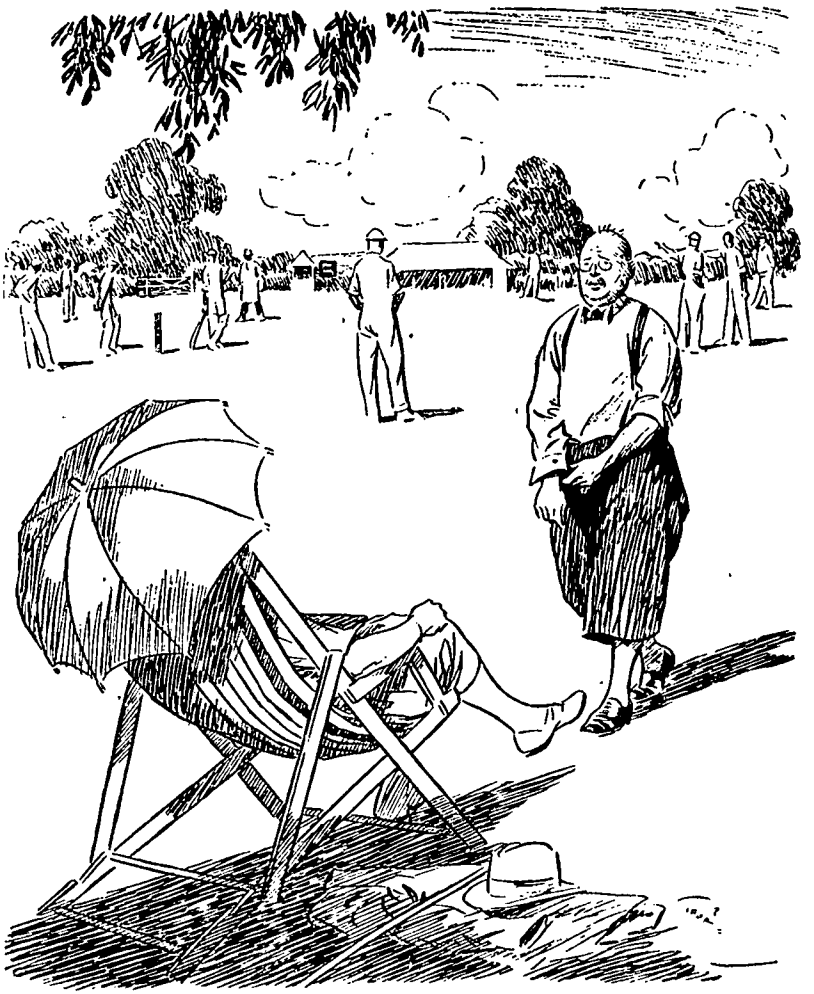
At that moment a shot rang out in the distance, and the next thing I knew was that I had regained my place in the tree, still clutching the rifle. I loaded in haste.

" If you hear a shot," Porterhouse had instructed me, " that probably means that a wounded tiger is coming towards you. My shot may possibly not have been fatal."

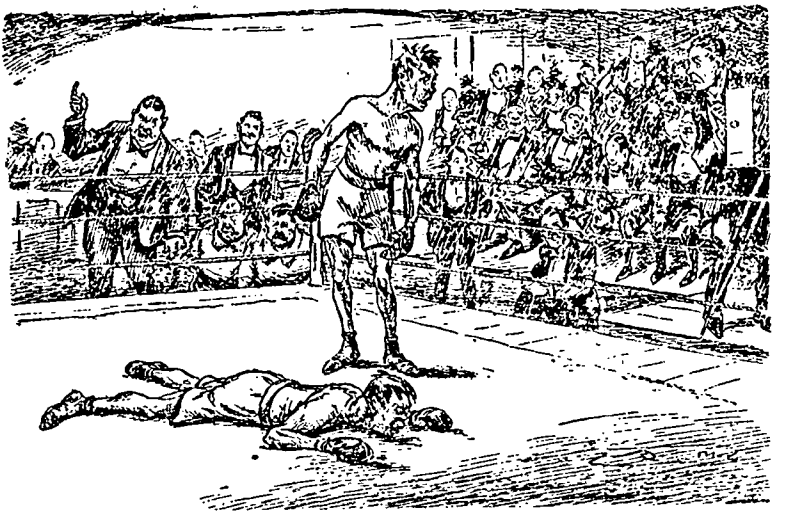
So Porterhouse had taken a pot at it, with the result that it was now seeking my life. Well, tiger-hunting is a very fine sport, except when the tiger is doing the hunting, then it becomes something more than sport; I mean I can take a joke as well as the next man, but——

A low rustling above my head. Help! It was only that confounded Bhil again in the gallery. I wished the tiger might mistake him for a monkey and bring him down, only in that case he could hardly fail to notice me in his ascent.

Now another rustle; on the ground this time, some way off. Of course



SUBSTITUTE (*returning*). "I only went out to oblige them, and they started calling me 'Silly-short-leg'!"



CINEMA PHOTOGRAPHER. "Would you mind doing that bit again? I forgot to turn the handle."

Mr. Jones of the Toxophilite Society surprises a burglar.

WIFE. "What is a betting-slip, dear?"
HUSBAND. "When you put your money on the wrong horse."

CAPTAIN OF SCRATCH SIDE (*to fast bowler who has started with two wides—one on the off and one on the leg*). "You 'll place your wicket-keeper where you want him, won't you?"

THINGS THEY DO MORE PICTURESQUELY ABROAD
A Tyrolean family makes the ascent to the local point of view.

I might have known it. The tiger had marked me down and was about to reduce me to pulp. And I had never made a will.

There was just time to do it. As you have gathered, I am a man of iron nerve. I felt quite calmly in my pockets for pencil and paper, and came, instead, upon my pipe. In a moment the surrounding jungle was filled with the smoke which I emitted in long despairing puffs.

Still the rustling continued, approaching nearer and nearer. Dash the tiger! Why didn't the stupid beast give me a wide berth? He must have lost his sense of smell. I crammed my pipe into my pocket and grabbed my rifle. I would sell my life dearly; I would reserve my fire until he came on and let him have it directly I got a close view.

I pointed my rifle, to find myself taking careful aim at Porterhouse, who was walking towards me in a curious crab-like manner. His face wore a look of strained intensity. I raised my rifle casually and pretended to be pointing at some object in the sky. Porterhouse continued his slow-motion foxtrot right round my tree, then he looked up and saw me.

"Oh, it's you," he gasped, almost dropping his weapon in disgust.

"Why are you creeping along like that?" I inquired. "Have you lost anything?"

" Allow me to inform you," replied Porterhouse with dignity, " that I am walking-up the tiger. I shot at the brute, and I expect I wounded him. Here are his pugs ; didn't you see him ? "

" I—er—in point of fact I didn't actually *see* him."

" Good heavens, you've been smoking."

" Well," I expostulated, " the tiger—I mean the brute—seems to have liked smoke. See how he circled my tree."

" But he's wounded," shrieked Porterhouse, as though wounded people didn't like smoke.

" Let's have a drink before we do anything else," I suggested ; " beating for tiger is thirsty work."

Porterhouse yielded. " All right ; we can wait a few minutes. Give time for his wound to stiffen."

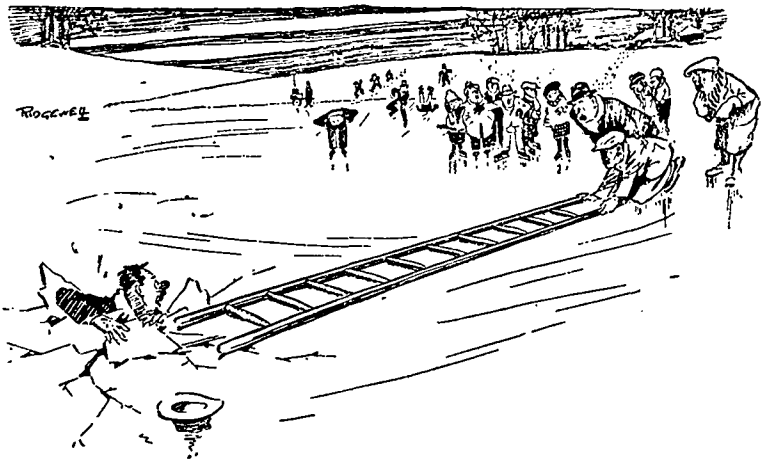
We parked our arsenal and sat down, grasping long tumblers. Then, just as we were in our first gulp, a yellow shape walked slowly into view, yawned and disappeared into the jungle.

E. P. W.

THE DIE-HARDS
A sketch in a Swiss hotel.

WEARY WILLIE JOINS THE MOVEMENT

"Dear Henry, splendid ski-ing here. Lost the rest of the party yesterday, and came down through the woods without taking a single toss."

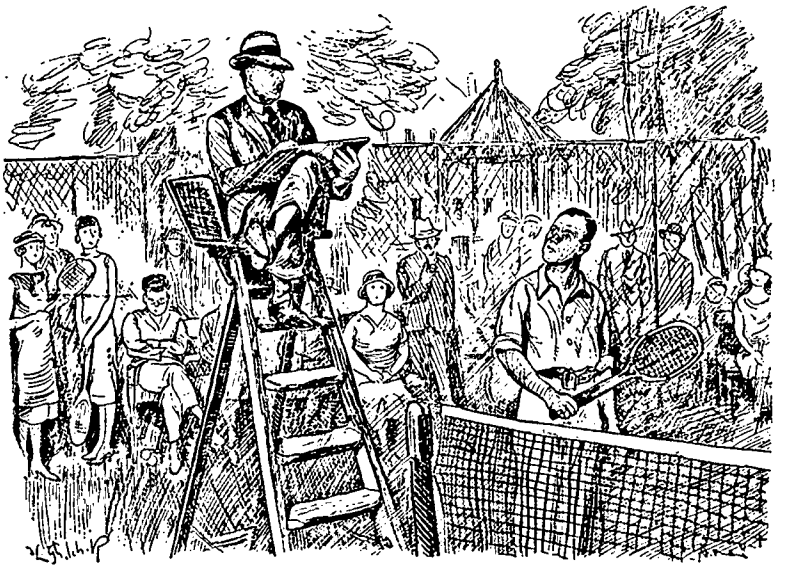


THE VICTIM (*indignantly*). "Trying to be funny, ain't yer? How do yer reckon I'm goin' ter get me feet on that?"

VIRILE PERSON. "By Jove! just as well I didn't wear my shorts."

"Cedric, what became of that other raisin?"

TACTFUL OPPONENT (*at half-time*). "I say, I don't want to make any insinuation that might spoil a perfectly topping match, but have you fellows seen anything of a fair-sized piece of ear?"



TRIALS OF AN UMPIRE

Scene: A Public Courts Tournament.

UMPIRE (*whose duty it is to announce score at end of each game*). "Game to Mr. Binks, who now leads five love in the second set, having won the first set."

MR. BINKS' OPPONENT. "All right, all right—you needn't rub it in!"

Walking Home

(Pheasant and Partridge Shooting ends)

THE last drive's done, the final salvo's sped,
The tossed shells lie still warm upon the loam ;
Afar a pheasant clatters up to bed,
Partridges answer on the ploughland's head,
And beaters scatter on the road for home,
Calling Good-nights along the darkling lane,
And we have seen a season through again.

Just wait a second till my pipe is lit . . .
And now, my Nell dog, we'll be homewards too ;
It *has* been fun, I've loved it, every bit—
The sport, the smiling hours that sponsored it ;
Clover and stubble and September blue ;
Then fiery forests where the outraged jay
Challenged aloud the stick-gaps far away.

Even those wild mornings when the West's dark gale
Hurled dead leaves flying from his pipes and drums

Had fierce delights and maybe some proud tale
Of difficulty dealt with on the nail;
Yes, *one* cock pheasant, crumpled as he comes
High in the tempest's heart, is more by far
Than half a hundred semi-sitters are.

And incident: 'tis jolly to look back
On one or other small triumphant thing—
Some right and left, picked with a neater knack
Than's most days mine, from out the whizzing pack;
That woodcock twisting on a warm brown wing.
I got him like an artist through the firs,
'Neath the shrewd eyes of artist onlookers.

I loved those rambles too, *sans* circumstance,

TENANT OF GROUSE MOOR (*to gamekeeper*). "Look 'ere—this sort of thing won't do for me. There ain't bin 'alf-a-dozen birds hit. I don't want any of yer 'igh-speed driving—you send 'em along gently, at about fifteen miles an hour."

THE HIGH PRIESTESS

When one strolled out to study more than shoot,
To learn the " fly " of coveys, frame the plans
And crafts of drives to be, and take one's chance
Of hedgerow pheasants flushing at one's boot,
And missed on that account. O golden ways,
O rich October's blazoned pomp of days !

But where, my Nell, do you come in ? You say
I stage the sport, the weather, my own skill
From mellow opening hours until to-day
Rang down the curtain on the finished play,
Yet feature not your wisdom and good-will ;
Is there to be, in short, no epilogue,
No mention of a little spaniel dog ?

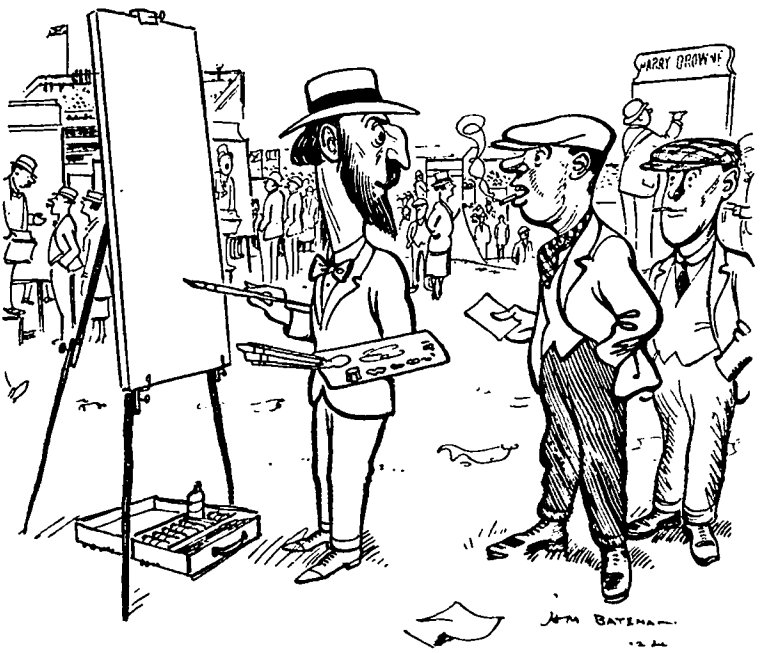
You dear old fool, do you indeed suppose
That I'm a so unmitigated churl
That, when my Muse attempts the season's close,

Your kind companionship, your steady nose
Shall go unhonoured? Never fear, old girl;
Your work, your silken wit, when all is done
Have been to me the full half of the fun.

And proud I've felt whene'er the Labrador,
Flashing, flung up beyond a runner's "fall,"
Missed the first priceless minute, wasted more
In fast but futile swings and casts, before
"Just try old Nell here!" down the drills they'd call;

And you would get a line no longer warm
And pull it off in full Field Trial form!

Well, till the Autumn; but regret I've none,
For the dark shortens and the days wax long,
And somehow, yes, *indecent* seems a gun
These virginal morns; why, in the chilly sun
Of yesterday the thrushes were in song;
And partridges are pairing, and there are
Lambs (hear 'em?) in the fold. The Spring's not far.



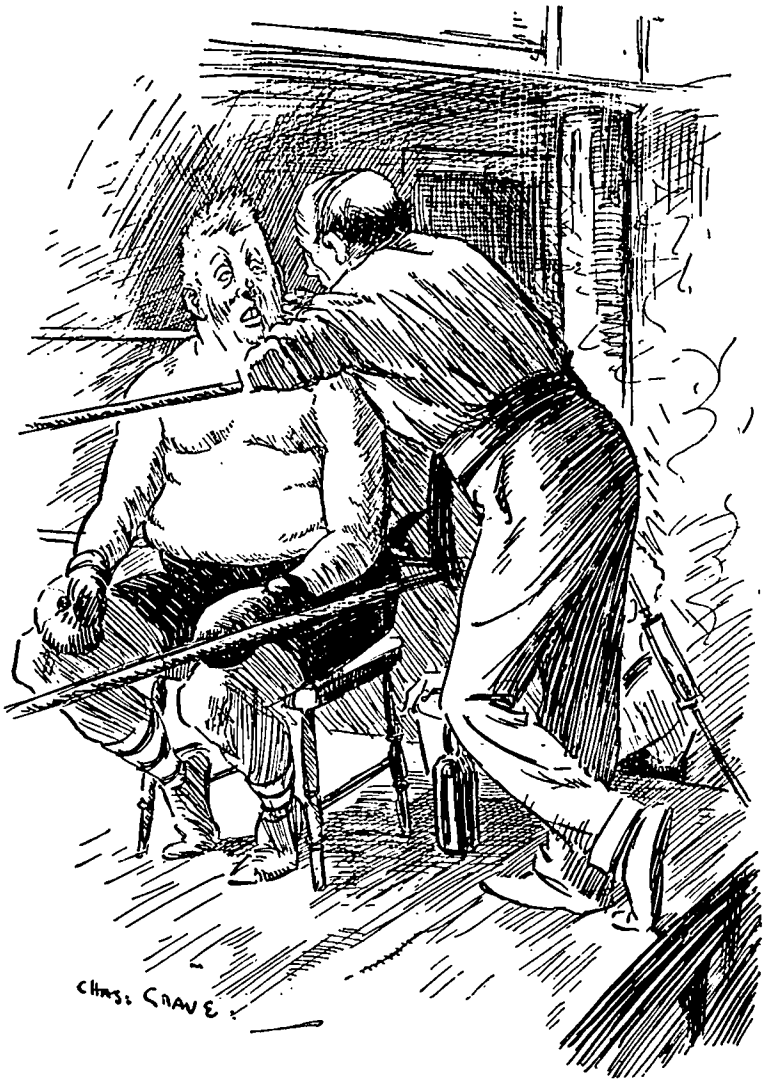
ON THE DOWNS

The artist who was asked "What price the favourite?"

THE EDITOR. "I'm afraid we shan't have room for your series of articles on 'The Evils of Speculation' until after the flat-racing season."

NERVOUS YOUTH. "I think I ought to explain. My service is rotten; I haven't played for weeks."

PARTNER. "Oh, that's all right. I've never played before."



SECOND (*to stout entrant in a Novice Competition*). "Now, don't forget—as soon as the bell goes rush at 'im an' keep flittin' in an' out like bits o' forked lightnin'."

TIPSTER. "I'll tell yer wot. If the 'orse I've give yer in that envelope don't win, come back 'ere an' watch me commit suicide."

CLASS CONSCIOUSNESS; OR, THE DRY FLY AND THE WORM

By Harley Bridge

"IT was there," said the perfect stranger, looking at the dark-shaded pool just below the little bridge, "that I once caught a fish in the most unlikely way you could imagine."

I looked at him. His deer-stalker was full of may-flies, his face without a shadow of guile. We had both drawn our cars aside from the road on to a plot of green grass beside the bridge. It was a glorious day. The fields were full of buttercups and mauve orchises, red campion and cuckoo-pint. There was an overpowering scent of may-blossom, which was later in that west-country valley than here. Not far off on the further bank frowned the old farm-house which had once been a border keep against the fiery politicians of Wales. And on the banks of the stream, almost virginal in their uncut simplicity, there was a great business of birds and creeping life. If you liked to wait for the kingfisher or watch the water-wagtail there was no better place. If you were deeply interested in the drama of the life of the water-rat you could revel in sensations there. The fly was on the water, but the trout, lazy and somnolent, rose, if at all, under the thickest arches of over-grown shade.

A Day with the Fly

AFTER THE RACE

"What do they do till the next Boat-race, Father?"
"Well—they go on with their rowin'—with a bit of studyin' thrown in."

We were both of us eating sandwiches, the stranger and I. We both had our flasks. It seemed as good a day as any for telling lies.

" Oh yes," I said weakly.

" I had been up here," he went on, " for some hours and was just proposing to motor down the road to the mill where the fishing begins. As I went slowly over the bridge I saw a good-looking rise just down there by that projecting stump, and stopped my car. The temptation came to me (my rod was ready) to play my line downstream from where I was, exactly as I sat at the steering-wheel. The place of course is quite impossible to reach from the bank."

" Quite," I said.

" You will scarcely believe it——"

" Oh, but I shall," I protested.

" You will scarcely believe it, but, sitting just where I was, I hooked him, more by luck than skill."

" Mayfly ? " I said.

" A grey drake. I was now in something of a dilemma. I treated him firmly, you may be sure, and I soon had him in below me and almost under the arch of the bridge. How to land him ? It could only be done, of course,

DEFEATED PUGILIST (*to trainer*). "That 's from that editor bloke. Wants me to tell 'im 'ow I lorst. 'Ow would yer say 'sock in the jaw' in a thahsand words?"

if I could find someone who would go down and push a net through the trees on one side or other of the stream ; but there was no one about.

" It was just then that my handbrake gave and, as I was not precisely on the crown of the bridge, my car began to roll back. I made a swift snatch at the brake with my left hand and a tremendous heave at the same moment with my right."

" And the cast held ? " I said, looking at him sternly. " You jerked that fish on to this bridge ? "

" Not on to the bridge," he said. " No. It was a good fish, too. Just under a pound."

" Just over, surely ? " I protested. " Say just over a pound."

" Perhaps a little bit over," he conceded. " But what happened was that I jerked it high and hard into the willows here on this bank of the stream. The line and cast became hopelessly entangled with the leaves and boughs, but the fish still hung beyond my reach from the bank, beyond my reach from the bridge. I laid my rod down by the parapet——"

" And climbed the tree," I hazarded, " with your landing-net in your teeth ? "

" Useless," he said. " I could see that at once. I drove rapidly to the

CAPTAIN (*to very unsuccessful lob bowler*). "Oi be sorry to 'ave to take 'ee off, Garge, but I must let the Vicar 'ave a go before the ball gets egg-shaped."

PROFITEER (*after trying a variety of patterns without success*). "Well, it looks pretty 'opeless when they won't 'ave a gold fly. What do they expect—diamonds?"

farm over there and fortunately found some men at work. They were sheep-shearing."

" ' I want to borrow a ladder,' I told them, ' to bring a fish down from a tree.' It took them a little time to understand the exact position of affairs, but when they did they were very nice about it. Two of them came with a ladder. We set it against the willows and I went up with the net."

I poured a little more whisky into the cup of my flask and drank it thoughtfully.

" You were lucky," I said.

" Ah, but wait a minute ; I haven't told you all. Standing on the ladder and stretching as far as I could reach, I could get the net about a yard below the fish, but no nearer than that. Nor, we decided, would it have been any easier to put the ladder in the stream and try to tackle the business from the water side of the tree. But I had a sudden inspiration. You know those long-handled pruning shears one uses for clipping trees or fruit-picking from high boughs ? "

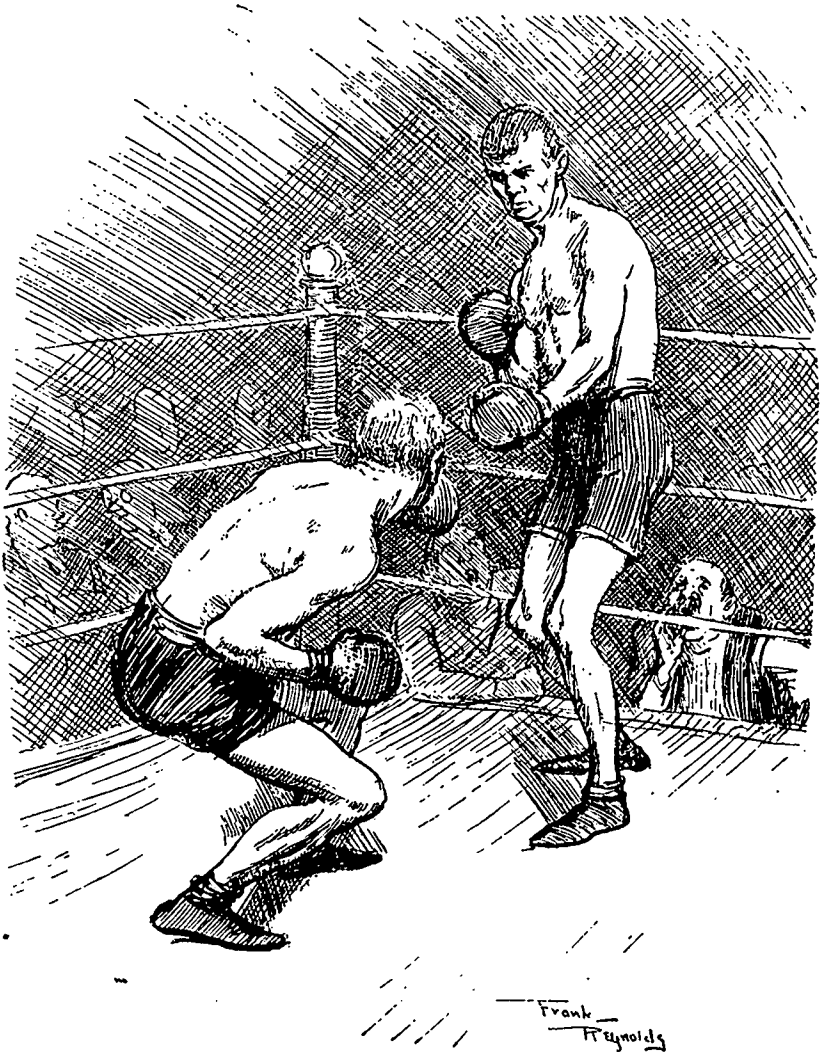
" I know them," I said, " but I never seem to have a pair with me when I want them most. I suppose you had them in your tool-box ? "

" No," he answered gently. " And they hadn't any, it seemed, at the

Scene: Boatrace Day

KINDLY LADY (*to lost child*). "Never mind, dear, don't cry; look at the gentlemen rowing."

THE PEAK OF THE HIKING SEASON



SECOND (*whose man's opponent has remained in a crouching position for some time*). "Set abaht 'im, Charley. I think the spring's broke."

VISITOR. "Why, that's the third wide he's sent down!"
VILLAGE SUPPORTER. "Ah! 'e be a good length bowler, Sir, but sometimes 'e do zeem to be a bit off his width."

farm. But they told me of a place about six miles away where I could borrow a pair, so I left the chaps, one at the foot of the ladder and the other standing at the top holding out the landing-net in case the fish should fall. I made wonderful time, I can tell you, in fetching those shears, though I had to go right into the hills.

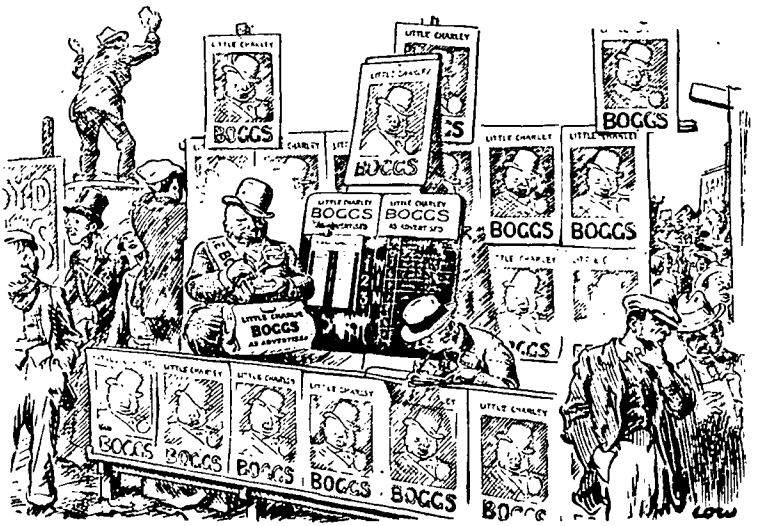
" ' What do you want them for?' asked the owner.

" ' To land a fish I am catching,' I said, ' just below Harley Bridge.'

" I spoke rather tensely. My excitement was great. He seemed surprised, but he let me have the implement at once. By the time I returned, swift though I had been, there was quite a little crowd collected here, where we are now. There was a tramp, and a couple of girls from the farm, and two other fishermen and the people from the Wisperton market-bus, which had drawn up by the side of the road. Some of them were standing on the bridge, and some near the ladder, giving advice. When I finally went up the ladder, behind the man who was holding the net, and snipped off the cast so that the fish fell into it, they gave me a resounding cheer."

There was silence in the land for some time after he had spoken, except for the hum of insects and the bustle of birds.

" Just under a pound you said it was ? " I remarked sorrowfully at last.



PUBLICITY

"Beauty itself doth of itself persuade
The eyes of men without an orator."
Shakespeare, "Rape of Lucrece," Stanza 5

HOSTESS (*arranging set*). "Mr. Jones, I'm afraid I don't know how you play. I couldn't make out from Jack's letter whether you were a *crack* or a *crock*."

" Just *over* a pound," he corrected me. " Eighteen ounces to be exact."

" On the grey drake ? "

" On the grey drake."

I looked at the flies in his hat. I looked at his boots, which were yellow with the pollen of buttercups. I looked at the frowning border-farm and the distant hills. I felt that the word was with me.

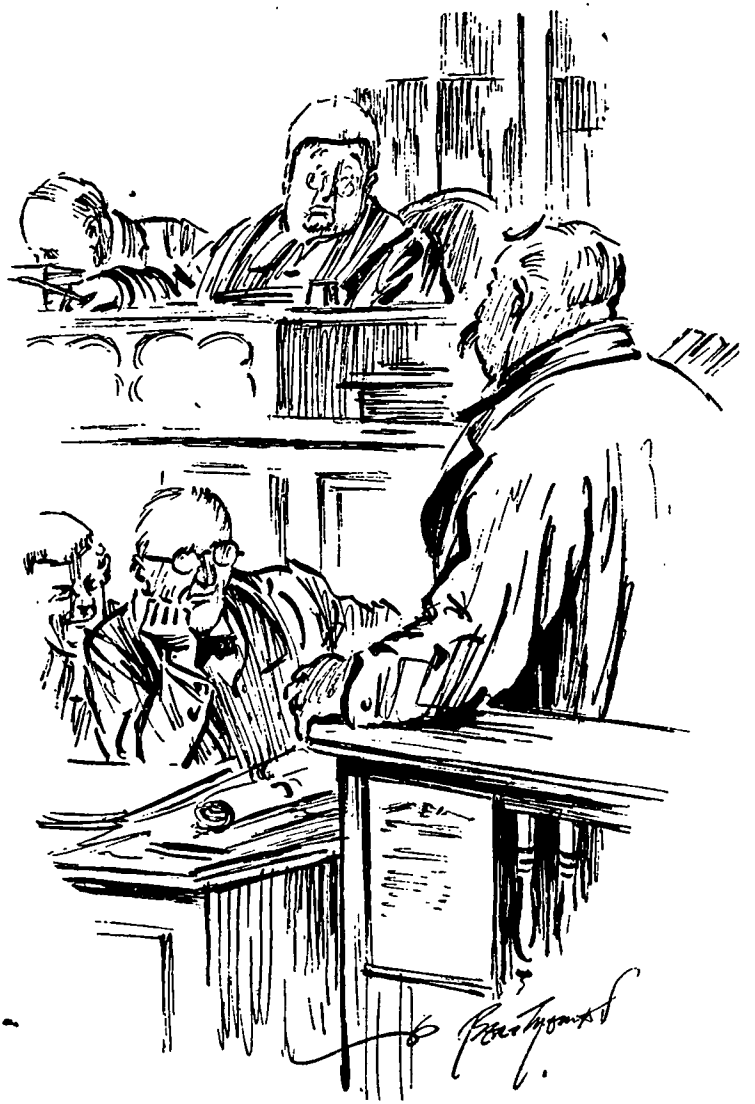
" I had rather a remarkable experience of my own," I said. " Not precisely here, but a little further down, in the long deep pool above the weir. I was using the wet fly and, at the very moment when I had hooked rather a good one—not, I think, more than a pound—just under a pound if anything —thirteen ounces to be exact—with my tail fly, a swallow took the dropper (a red spinner it was), strangely enough without breaking the cast."

" And you landed both of them ? " inquired the perfect stranger a little anxiously.

" No," I said, " I didn't. I should have, but in my excitement I slipped off the bank and was drowned."

He raised his left hand to his deer-stalker with a quiet gesture of approval and, taking up his rod, moved slowly away into the flower-starred meadow above the bridge. EVOE

ADMIRER. "Could I trouble you for your autograph?"



WITNESS. "An' when 'e come up I asks 'im wot won the two-thirty."
JUDGE. "What won the two-thirty what?"

JACK (*reading father's expert article on last Test match*). "Oh, I say, Dad—you should have consulted me before you wrote all this."

LANDLADY (*to famous Rugger player*). "Will you be wantin' your little jumper washed?"

The Way of a Sea-Wolf

IT had rained at last. The bracken was shining, and the burns made so much noise at 1 A.M. that it was difficult to hear the cuckoo (for the Highland cuckoo does not go to bed in June). But by breakfast-time the rain had stopped.

"Disgusting," said the Major.

Of all the woebegone faces that bent above their porridge his was the saddest. The saddest but not the fiercest. For that I gave the Rear-Admiral the palm. The tremulous hope that the rain would souse the hills and blot out the landscape for three continuous days had fluttered in every heart, but it was not to be. In the whole history of Scotland there had scarcely ever been so foul a June.

"This ghastly sun!" muttered the Rear-Admiral as he helped himself to marmalade. "There's no more water in the loch than yesterday."

"A *little* more," I pleaded, buttering a scone.

"Possibly two inches," he admitted grudgingly. "But there's no water at all."

THE LAST STRAW

"Sparrers bitin' well this evenin', guvner?"

NOVICE (*to Instructor*). "Now, how many lessons shall I need before I can do that?"

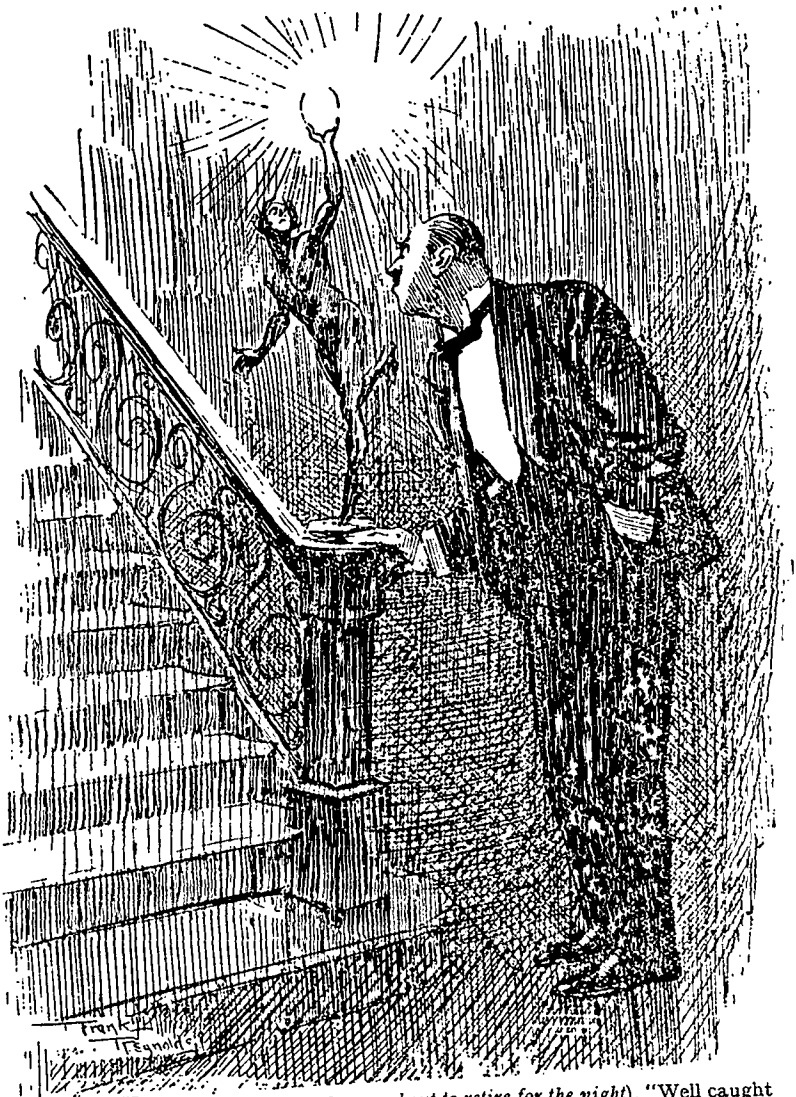
I had to agree that he was right. Practically speaking, Loch Quaigh was empty. It contained, let us say, only about a thousand million gallons, whereas it ought to have contained eleven hundred million. I don't know much about the measurements of loch water. But from our point of view it was a Sahara. Camels could walk about it with their tongues hanging out. The sea-trout had not arrived.

As a lover desires a letter from his mistress, so for some seven weary weeks the hearts of the visitors at the Strathmorran Hotel had been desiring rain. And now it had come, but only a pitiful mockery of it—a thing which might have been described as a sensational cloud-burst in the south of England, but at Strathmorran was scarcely enough to soften the air, and certainly not enough to attract the attention of a sea-trout anxious to attend to family affairs and move up from the sea.

Still, there *were* sea-trout in Loch Quaigh, creatures which had migrated almost before the memory of man, during the last spot of deluge in the spring. And herein lay the whole drama of the Strathmorran Hotel. These old and *blasés* annuals would not look at a fly ; but by dint of arduous trolling with minnows for seven solid hours each visitor was liable to catch an average of about one small sea-trout every three days, and the bitterness of rivalry was terrible.

Treated by Izaak Walton, fishing is an amiable pursuit, unprovocative

NEW AND NERVOUS ASSISTANT. "It's a splendid lure, Sir. Once get a salmon on that and it won't be the fault of—er—(*Customer glares*)—I mean it won't be your fault if it gets off."



FAST BOWLER (*guest at country house, about to retire for the night*). "Well caught Sir. We could have done with you in the slips to-day."

ASIATIC SOCIETY
158694

PERFECT LITTLE GENTLEMAN (*about to have his first lesson in self-defence*). "Excuse my glove, won't you?"

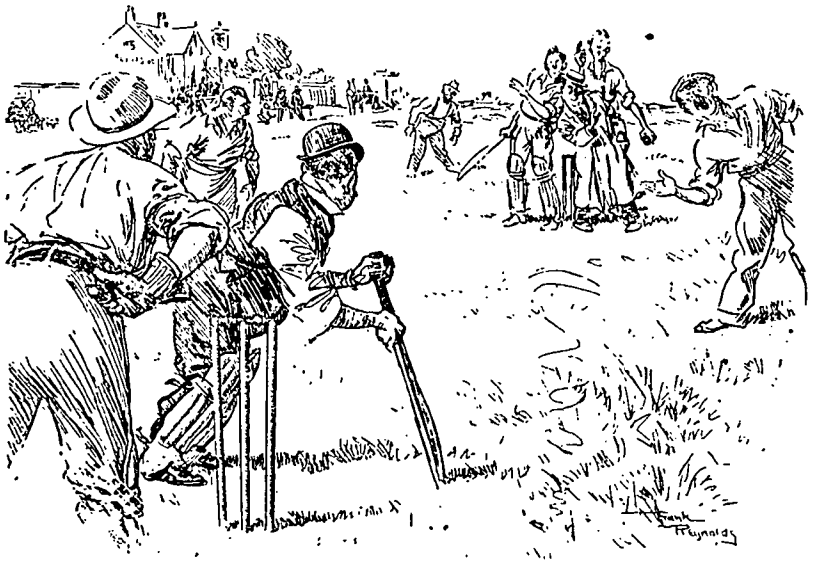
GUEST (*who has been given a mount*). "Has my horse come back?"

GROOM. "Yessir; scared to death. No one's ever fallen off 'im before."

"I say, old chap, before you come out, do you think that would be a pretty good spot to fix this notice?"

of the blacker kinds of hate. But not so at the Strathmorran Hotel. The wild caterans who gathered at the backdoor of the hotel and took down baskets and tackle to their boats scowled at each other as if the glens were at war. Fishermen wished each other good fortune with about as much sincerity as a barrister would show if he hoped that opposing counsel might win his case. Hard-bitten men, they muttered in corners and selected mysterious lures. One, who had brought with him from Loch Ross a glass jar filled with what appeared to be coloured sardines preserved in alcohol, was the object of mingled admiration and awe.

But even in that dour struggle it is safe to say that the feud between the Senior and Junior Services was the most formidable. Yesterday the Major by great good fortune had captured a two-and-a-half-pound sea-trout, whilst the Rear-Admiral had scoured the deep without so much as catching sight of a submarine enemy. Fortified with more marmalade, he went down to the pier and looked at the shining beauty of Loch Quaigh as though it had been guilty of insubordination, as indeed it had. Instead of being wild with storm and wreathed with hurricane, it presented the loathsome appearance of a picture-postcard sent to an aunt. And how in thunder dammy could the sea-trout be expected to move on a vile morning like this ? Yet even in the worst weather conditions man's toil must go on. The baskets were ready;



AN AFTER-LUNCHEON PROBLEM
The giving of centre.

the long rods were rigged astern. One after another the caterans, toiling at the oar, pulled out into the placid waters. The daily naumachia commenced.

Watching from a boat in the distance I half hoped for some exposition of the Nelson touch on the part of the Rear-Admiral and his crew. Might he not (as though accidentally) ram the enemy or foul his lines? Or, in the event of the Major getting into a sea-trout, organise a cutting-out expedition and gaff the prey under his adversary's nose? But this was not to be. His gillie rowed him far and fast into the distance. Apparently he was going to wear out the opposition by sheer strength and speed.

The lights on the loch changed. We trolled—we lunched—we trolled.

It was, of course, the custom at the Strathmorran Hotel that a conquering hero returned from the water-battle should sit idly on the lawn with his shining trophy at his feet. He did not precisely compel, yet he by no means shrank from admiration and hypocritical praise. What then was the horror of those who had caught little or nothing to find the Major, about 5 P.M., smoking a cigar on the grass-plot with a good four-and-a-half-pounder dropped as it were by some fairy fishmonger just in front of his boots.

Worse still, what had happened to the Rear-Admiral? Had he struck his

flag ? Did he know about this new massacre ? And if so, what then ?

Apparently he had not yet returned. I went down to the pier and sighted him in the offing. His equipment was tremendous. Besides the two usual rods levelled to port and starboard and one astern, he carried two spare engines of death forrard, loaded with alternative minnows and spoons. Reduction of armaments had no meaning for him. He seemed to have nothing that would not kill a sea-trout, except perhaps a yo-yo.

" Done any good ? " I shouted. Sound travels over the loch for miles.

" One ! " he bellowed back.

" Weight ? " I cried.

" Four-and-a-half."

At the same time the clouds, which had gradually been coming up with a west wind all the afternoon, began to discharge themselves furiously on the surface of the water. It looked as if another pint or two of water might be about to filter into the loch.

The Rear-Admiral's craft came closer and with a pale face I told him the awful news.

" The Major has one of four-and-a-half pounds too," I cried. " None of the rest did much."

HOST (*to novice with waders on for the first time*). "Plenty of fish just where you are. Caught any?"

NOVICE. "No; but I keep treading on 'em."

EXCITED URCHIN. "Will ye boil 'im, or fry 'im, Mister?"

The boat was by this time about a hundred yards from the landing-stage, torrents were falling and the waves were whipped into foam by the squall, but the Rear-Admiral never faltered for a moment.

" About ship ! " he said.

I was drinking a whisky-and-soda at about half-past eleven when he came back to the hotel. The sky had cleared, but the burns were still noisy in the white night. I stepped out into the porch and saw the tireless cateran behind him carrying some heavy indeterminable spoil.

" A five-pounder ! " said the Rear-Admiral.

" Don't you think we ought to wake the Major ? " I inquired after fondly touching the beast.

He smiled grimly.

" A note pushed under the door will be enough," he said. " He'll find it before he shaves."

I daresay the Major did shave, but it is very doubtful whether he had any breakfast. His boat could be seen from the window a mile off shore whilst we still were pleading with the waitress to hurry our bacon and eggs. But what chance had he ? It was another disgustingly fine morning and there was not a drop of water in the loch. EVOE

ETHEL. "I reckon they ought to put monkeys on the dogs to give it a little 'uman interest."

SMALL SPECTATOR (*breaking the silence after a lengthy period*). "I don't know 'ow you can stick it. I should never make a fisherman."

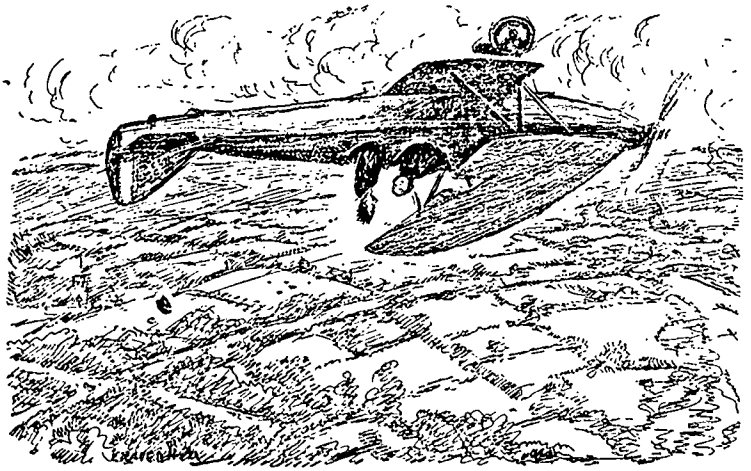
UNSUCCESSFUL SPORTSMAN. "No; and you'll never make a mascot neither."

THE MAJOR. "Cheery greeting that old boy gave you. Who is he?"
THE MERCHANT. "Oh, a great friend of mine. I shot him three times last year."

OFFICE BOY (*with great presence of mind, as he catches sight of his employer in queue*). "Er—would you kindly direct me to the cemetery?"

OPPONENT (*having torn a piece of jersey off famous International*). "I say, you might autograph this for me after the game."

MUSCULAR CHRISTIAN. "Let's see—you're the artist who's always pulling the curate's leg in the papers, aren't you? Well, we're next, and I'm a curate."



"But, my good man, all the best people fly like this nowadays."

YACHTSMAN. "That was a nasty squall."
NERVOUS PASSENGER. "I think it very unkind of you, George, to allude to it at all, even if I did."

SPORTSMAN. "What on earth's happened to the favourite?"
THE JONAH MAN. "I put some money on him."

Ascot

A-TISHOO ! A-tish-oo ! A-tish-*oo* ! A-TISH-OO !
Merciful heavens ! why did I come to this place ?

I came here to write an article about Ascot.

The sun . . . the distant hills . . . the trees . . . a-tish-oo ! . . . the ribbon of turf . . . the charming frocks . . . the King . . . the horses . . . George . . . hay-fever . . . a-TISH-OO !

I sneezed all the way to Ascot. I have sneezed all round Ascot. Pray Heaven I may soon sneeze my way home. A-tish-oo !

Can it be possible that all these teeming creatures are *enjoying* themselves —these labelled lords and ladies, these labelled bookmakers, these labelled horses—while I—a-TISH-OO ?

This is the crown of the Season. This is the zenith of the year. This is what the Socialist papers call wanton luxury. If only they knew how miserable I am !

There is a tickle in my nose, my eyes, my throat, my ears. . . .

However, this is Ascot.

Why did I bring George to Ascot ?

It was a mistake to bring George to Ascot.

Ascot for such as George is real hard work. It is perpetual motion. First of all we fight our way to the Paddock (a guinea or two). Then we fight our way round the Paddock, violently exercising our powers of judgment. We

BOOKMAKER (*to punter with a long list of very small commissions*). "I'll tell you wot, Clarence. Put a 'apenny stamp each way on everything, an' 'ave a real gamble."

" 'Ere y' are, Sir—all the winners!"
"Dear me—is there no other news in the paper?"
"Rather! All the runners fer ter-morrer."

LABOUR LOST

SYMPATHETIC FAST BOWLER. "What! has it knocked a tooth out, old chap? Hard lines!"
INJURED BATSMAN. "Yes, and I've only just had it stopped too!"

examine the horses for the 1.30. So far as I can see, one racehorse is like another racehorse—only some are thinner than others, and others are more ethereal than the rest. But George sees that Milksop is sweating, and Mutton-broth is not. George observes that the horse Phalaris is on his toes, while the horse Briar-root is clumping round the place on his heels. So we fight our way through the Paddock again and send a telegram to a man called Pipp (Eustace Pipp) about the horses Mutton-broth and Phalaris. Then we fight our way through a long underground tunnel (no extra charge for this) and up a huge staircase (another guinea or two) to the top of the Grand Stand. There we survey the race. Mutton-broth is last and Phalaris is last but one. Then we fight our way down the stairs, through a crowd of people who have backed Beet-root, the winner, through the tunnel again and back to the Paddock.

There we examine the horses for the 2.30. We select Bull's-eye and Dog's-body, we struggle to the Post-Office, we jostle through the tunnel, we battle up the stairs, we see Pease-blossom win, and we stagger back to the Paddock (through the tunnel) in time to select Bear's-grease for the three-o'clock. And so on. . . .

INDIGNANT BOOKMAKER. "Yer takes six ter four a bob each way, an' then 'as the sauce ter come 'ere and ask me for three an' tenpence 'alf-penny when yer 'orse 'as only dead-'eated. Ain't yer never bin ter school?"

NERVOUS PUNTER (*who has plunged on the favourite*). "There's something about our bookie I don't like."

FRIEND. "What—his face?"

NERVOUS PUNTER. "No, his running-shoes."

"Goin' to 'ave a look at the gee-gees at Kempton Park to-day, Sir?"
"No. I'm going to watch the squirrels at Kew Gardens."

FIRST RACING MAN. "There ain't no gettin' away from it, Jim. Your luck 's dead out. Can't find a winner nohow."

SECOND RACING MAN. "*Winner!* Why, if there was ten 'osses runnin' in a race an' I 'd backed every single one of 'em, there 'd be a lightnin' strike o' jockeys before they was arfway round the course!"

EARNEST TENNIS-PLAYER (*to daughter of the house*). "Ask them to put something on their heads, will you? The dazzle puts me off my game."

And, speaking for myself, sneezing the whole time. . . .
That is Ascot.
That is the crown of the Season.
That is the zenith of the year.
If you have a label on the left breast

LORD HADDOCK, M.V.O., G.B., P.S.A., T.C.

you miss out the tunnel and the stairs and hover in the Royal Enclosure between fights. But George and I are not allowed in the Royal Enclosure—extraordinary thing—and me in my new Panama!

So, as far as I am concerned, Ascot is too much like work. I have now seen three races. I decline to see the 3.30. I will sit here and sneeze quietly in the Paddock.

* * * * * * *

After the three-o'clock, as a matter of fact, we made a variation. Instead of fighting our way through the tunnel we fought our way over-land through Tattersall's (a large area of land entirely populated by wild beasts) and along the course to the Paddock. Against the railing dividing the course from the Royal Enclosure stood a large crowd, gazing frankly at the persons in the

Royal Enclosure. Not to be outdone in admiration, we joined this crowd, and George raised his field-glasses the better to see. Up comes a policeman and taps him on the shoulder.

" No glasses, please," said the policeman.

" But mayn't I look at the lords and ladies ? " said George. " Everybody else is doing it."

" Looking's one thing," said the officer, " glasses is another. Where's yer manners ? "

" Do you mean to tell me," said George, " that it is manners to stand in a row and stare with the naked eye, but unlawful to stand in the same row and look through a magnifying-glass ? A nice distinction indeed."

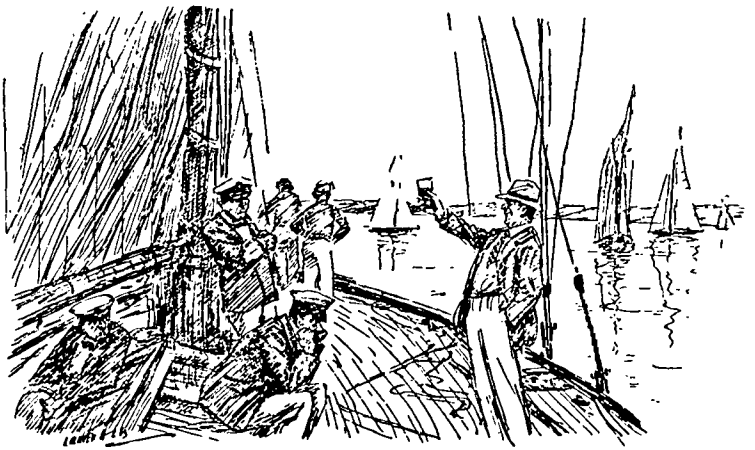
" I don't know nothing about that," said the officer firmly, " but no glasses, please."

" The whole thing is grossly illogical," said George.

" Illogical's one thing," said the officer, " glasses is another."

" The people I am looking at," said George, " have labels on their chests, giving their names and titles. What are these labels for ? For the purpose of identification, I take it ? "

WEST-END HOSTESS. "Hullo! a queen wasp. I'll swat it."
AFTERNOON VISITOR (*with strict ideas of sportsmanship*). "Good heavens! don't hit it *sitting*."

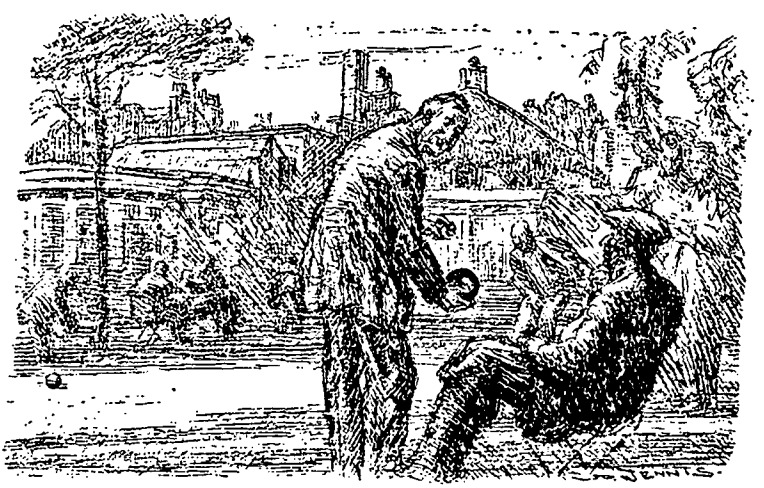


IN THE DOLDRUMS

There are times when the toast of "Here's to yachting!" is not received with marked enthusiasm.

VILLAGE UMPIRE (*advancing down pitch, after resisting two appeals for l.b.w.*). "You better take a fresh middle, Jarge, 'cos if 'e 'its 'ee again in the zame place I shall 'ave to give 'ee out."

FAIR SKIPPER. "Wind gettin' up nicely—what?"



SMITH (*member of bowling club*). "Do you know these balls cost five guineas each?"

JONES (*golfer*). "By Jove! I hope you don't lose many in the 'rough.' "

PUPIL (*after recovering somewhat*). "I say, is it necessary to knock me down like this?"

OLD PUGILIST. "Bless yer 'eart, no, Sir. Stand up and I'll show yer a dozen other ways."

" You can take what you like," said the officer, " but no glasses, please."

" It is impossible for me to read their labels," continued George, " without the aid of a high-powered glass. I may easily mistake the Earl of Rudd for Coloney Bungay, K.V.O."

" I can't help that, Sir," said the constable, unmoved.

" As a matter of fact," said George loyally, " I'm looking at His Majesty the King."

" Then you don't need no glasses," said the constable. And this was an answer so conclusive that George slunk on into the Paddock.

I shan't bring George to Ascot again.

A-tish-oo !

I shall never come to Ascot again.

* * * * * * *

Here in the Paddock, now that the horses and the people have gone to the race, it is very peaceful. The 3.30 rolls round the course unheeded. To be

perfectly frank, I do not care very much who wins the 3.30. I have seen Saucy Sue running; I know no horse will run more beautifully than that: why worry, then?

It is surprising how many people are still in the Paddock, entirely ignoring the 3.30. Over there is a "Champagne Only" bar . . . A-tish-oo! Damn!

Here come the crowd again, all agog for the four-o'clock. Such dresses! And such faces! Oh, dear!

I see a vision—the back-view of a vision. Surely a frock so ravishing must clothe a vision! She turns and approaches. On her breast is the label

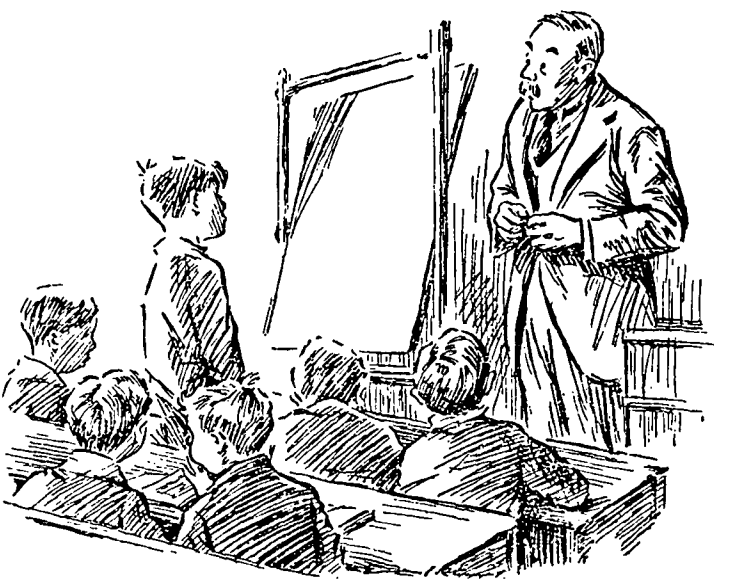
ROYAL ENCLOSURE
LADY TAFFETA BLOOM

Her face. . . . Oh, dear!

This grieves me, for, if the aristocracy cannot produce visions, then what is it for? With all the time, the trouble, the money . . .

George says, "Just seen a charmer, old boy." He says this every few minutes.

Either George is very lucky or our tastes differ. I have wandered up and down the race-course and not one genuine vision have I seen, only the horse



"Now, Jones, who defeated the Philistines?"
"I dunno, Sir. I don't follow them Amateur League teams."

RACE-GOER. "I'll bet you don't really know Lord Durby."
TIPSTER. "Well, if you don't believe me, 'op into the paddick an' arsk Lord Lonsdale."

Macaroon, who took my fancy in the march-past for the three-o'clock and was last but two.

" George," I said, " I have seen more visions on the Underground Railway in five minutes than I have seen at Ascot in a whole day."

" Quite right, old boy," said George. " But look how beautiful the men are ! Come and have a Champagne Only."

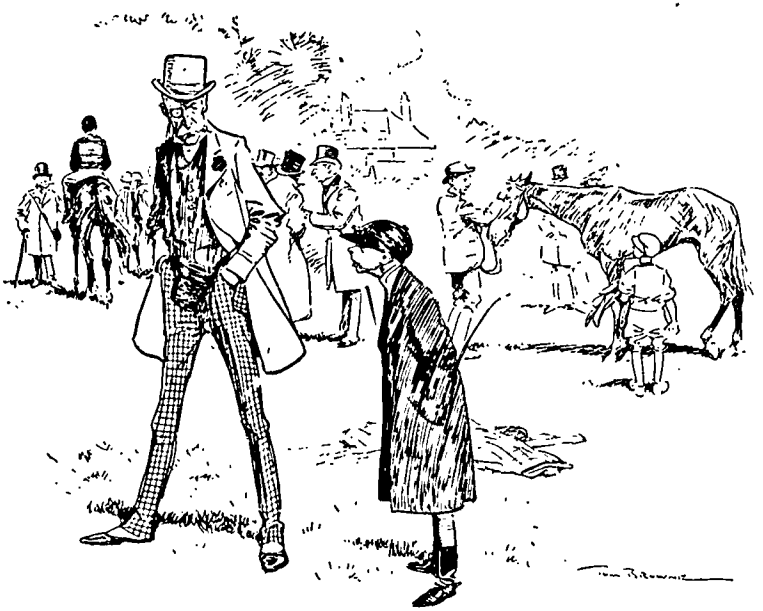
I come ; but what an over-rated drink is champagne ! And by what strange law am I allowed to drink champagne at half-past three in the afternoon ? Never mind. I have missed another race. Another hour or two and the day will be over. . . . Here are the first, second and third of the four-o'clock in three separate pens. Each of these animals has run seven furlongs on a hot day. All are sweating disgustingly—especially Pintail (third). I shall not buy Pintail. They are being weighed. Or the jockey is being weighed. Or the owner is being weighed. Who knows ? A black ball is hoisted at the fore. The horses go away, still sweating. I shall never see Pintail again. Yet I backed Pintail to win. Pintail has lost again. I shall now have another Champagne Only by way of consolation. George backed Flute-player, who did win. He will have another Champagne Only by way of celebration. The King is going away. The horses are massing for the five-o'clock. " George," I cry, " what is it all *for* ? A-TISH-OO ! "

" Don't sneeze, old boy," says George. " Not at Ascot." A. P. H.

HE. "I say, that sort o' thing puts you off skating a bit, doesn't it?"
SHE. "Don't be discouraged, darling; you'll get like that in time."

THE END OF THE SEASON

SYMPATHETIC FRIEND. "Well, you've laid her up nicely for the winter, anyhow."



CAME IN LAST

OWNER. "Why didn't you ride as I told you? Didn't I tell you to force the pace early and come away at the Corner?"

JOCKEY. "Yes, m'Lord, but I couldn't very well leave the horse behind."

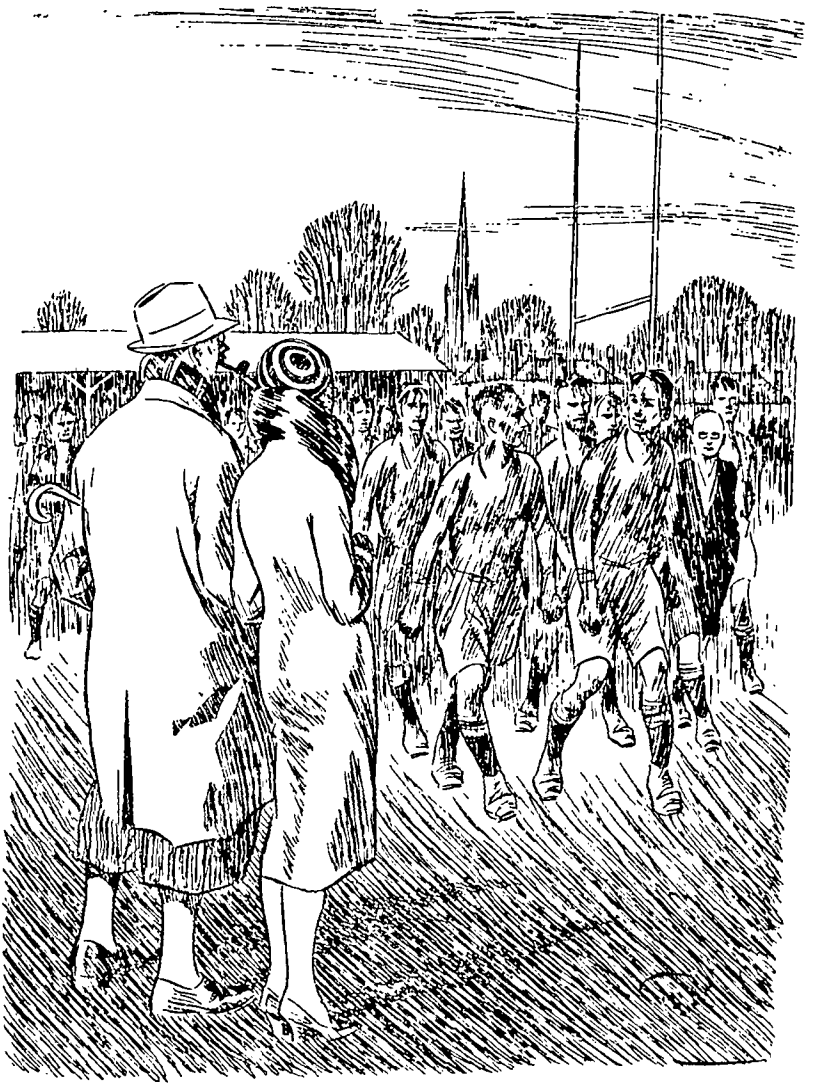
Aintree

THERE are many famous courses
In the width of English ground
Where the steeple-chasing horses
And the rainbow silks go round ;
But it's Aintree, Aintree, Aintree
Where the champion 'chasers run,
Where there's courage to be tested
And there's glory to be won.

There the dancing sunbeams quiver
On the colours as they glide,
Or the mists of Mersey river
Give but glimpses of the ride ;
But it's always Aintree—Aintree
Where the pride of England waits
To hear the turf responding
To the drum of racing-plates.

There the gallant lads are weighing
For the ride they love so well ;
There the serried crowds are swaying
As they hear the saddling-bell.
And it's Aintree, Aintree, Aintree,
Boot and saddle, fence and fall,
And it calls to sporting England
As no other course can call.

W. H. O.



PROUD SUPPORTER. "Those are our fellows, darling—in white."

Our Predecessors' Games

I daresay our Predecessors got a certain amount of Pleasure out of their Games, but—

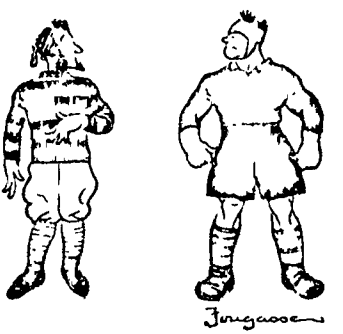
It seems hard to believe—

That—

They—

Ever—

Actually—



Won any.

FRIEND (*to Candidate for Atlantic honours*). "What! not going after all?"
INTREPID AIRWOMAN. "No. Bert says if we carry *all* my mascots we shall finish in the sea; and I daren't go without them, so the flight is off."

"How are we goin' to manage, Mum, about packing these here clogs?"

Some Ski-ing Reflections

IT is now late in the season. The hospital-trains, full of helpless cripples, are leaving Switzerland for the Channel Ports. The hotel-keepers will soon be busy counting their money and perpending whether to remain in business just one year more or to start straight away dabbling in international finance. In places the snow is getting thin where myself and others dug temporary graves, and where an Alsatian dog searched busily for the Antipodes through the whole of one forenoon—both to the general detriment of novices who subsequently passed that way.

Hardened travellers who would scorn to feel homesick have begun to long surreptitiously for table-joints which they can recognise; and those unfortunates who have only clothes and honour left are wondering how they can find out about trains without consulting the concierge and giving him cause to expect a larger tip.

I sit reading one of last year's "Tatlers," and asking myself if the ordinary tourist is sufficiently studious of his own welfare. He allows himself to be entirely dictated to by precedent.

Because certain lunatics career madly down precipices on narrow boards,

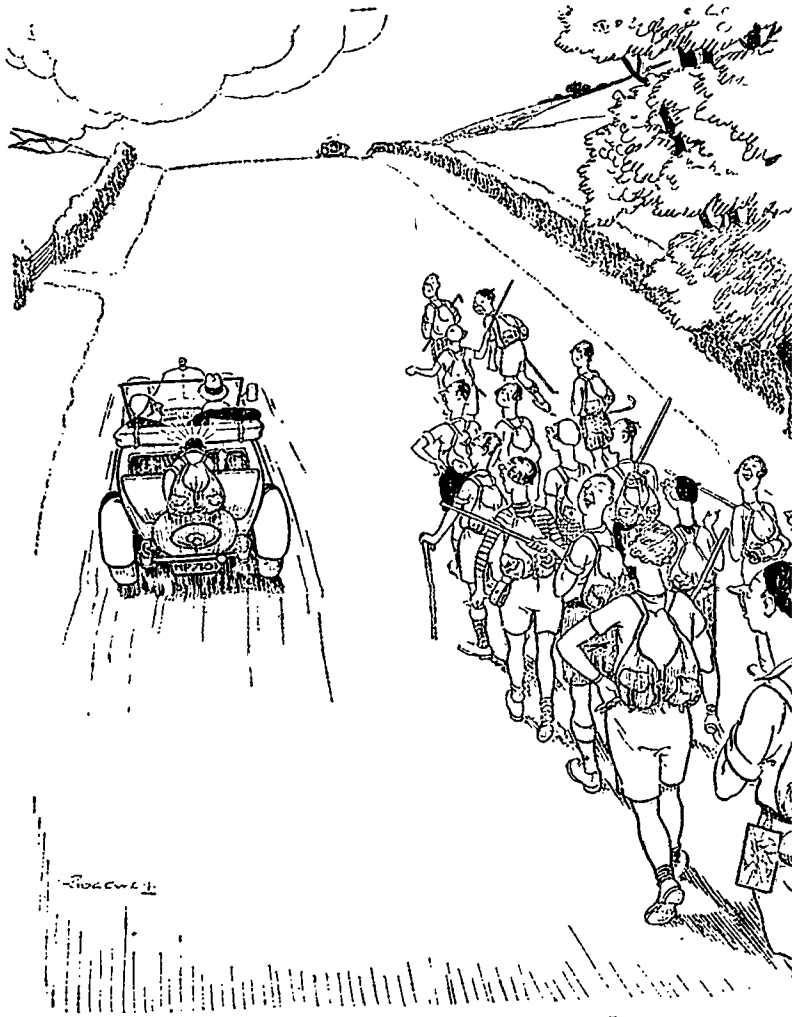
should all the world put pride before any vestige of control? Why not a good strong brake which could be engaged at will?

Because advertisements order him to expensive places abroad, should he obey blindly for the mere sake of sliding down a hill—a whim that could be indulged in any hilly part of England (upon wheels too, which submit to the lord of creation instead of having ideas of their own, frequently divergent)? If the element of danger was an attraction, the present toll of road accidents would suggest a sport not entirely free from hazard.

Remaining at home might also mitigate the anxiety of relatives who are apt to read into every account of a mountain accident the absorbing history of poor George's snowy end. If George remained in England and threatened to perish they would at least have the consolation of knowing that the mortuary was nice and handy.

Though loved ones far away will ever engage the thoughts, George on holiday is naturally bored by the need to write every other day. But for this (if George still insists on going abroad) I have a remedy, a kind of Field-Service postcard which would leave him leisure of an evening to tell what

INSTRUCTRESS. "Ah! *that*'s better; *that*'s what I want to see—a little more he-man stuff."



THE HIKER WHO HAD ACCEPTED A LIFT

TENSE MOMENTS IN SUBURBIA
The New Members Appropriate No. 1 Court.

ANGLER (*returning home after a heavy day with rod and flask*). "You're—damliar, Sir! There never was—fish—tha'size."

lies he liked in the smoking-room about his prowess on skis that afternoon, and at the same time give the old folk at home something to bite on.

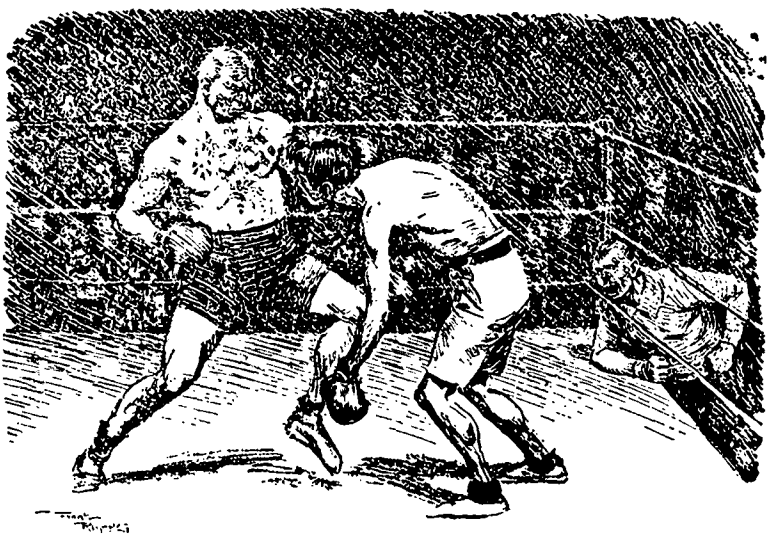
DEAR . . . :—

I am . .	In good health. / Not so well as yesterday. / Dead.
To-day we had	Sunshine. / Blizzard. / Avalanche.
All . .	Enjoyed themselves. / Caught cold. / Were buried alive.
They are .	Sunburnt. / A little stiff. / Due out of bed next August.
I have broken	One ski. / Both legs. / My bedroom tumbler.

I propose to . { Return to-morrow.
Stay for Spring flowers.
Book coffin through by flying hearse.

Cross out matter which does not apply.

It will be seen that this allows for all eventualities, even George's demise, when his friends abroad would be saved the composition of such a long and tiresome letter as might seriously interfere with their plans for the following day.



THE TATTOOER'S ART

EXASPERATED BACKER. " 'It 'im, Charley; don't look at them pictures."

" Do partridges drink ? " asks a daily paper. The suspicions of sportsmen have sometimes been aroused by the unsteadiness of the flight of these birds after luncheon.

Bowls is recommended as an ideal woman's game for beauty-giving recreation in the open air. We have often been struck by the athletic grace of its male exponents.

OUR VILLAGE CAPTAIN. "Look out for this chap, Fred. He made eight against us last year."

HOST. "Our bags are certainly bigger than they were last year."

A REARGUARD ACTION

INGOING BATSMAN (*who has been commandeered at the last moment*). "Er —haven't you another pair of guards? My legs are quite exposed at the back."

Extremely Provoking

(Everybody seems to be swimming the Channel successfully nowadays except the English and the French)

HAS earth any limit
To lords of the Channel ?
Will Chinamen swim it
When Swedes are grown banal ?
Will no one at Calais,
Will no one at Dover
Say Muscovites bally
Well aren't to swim over ?

This sea is no plaything
For all to try pranks in ;
'Twas put there for bathing
Ourselves and the Franks in ;
Constructed quite simply
For resident waders,
The foam is now pimply
With forms of invaders.

They come with their steamer,
Their lunch and their goggles,
The mind of the dreamer,
Beholding them, boggles ;
They sit on our beaches—
Thrice bronze, oaken-hearted—
And eat their tinned peaches
Before they have started.

Untaxed in their entry
By Gauls and by Britons,
No uniformed sentry

Denies them admittance ;
Their constant appointment
They keep with the briny,
Smeared over with ointment
Which renders them shiny.

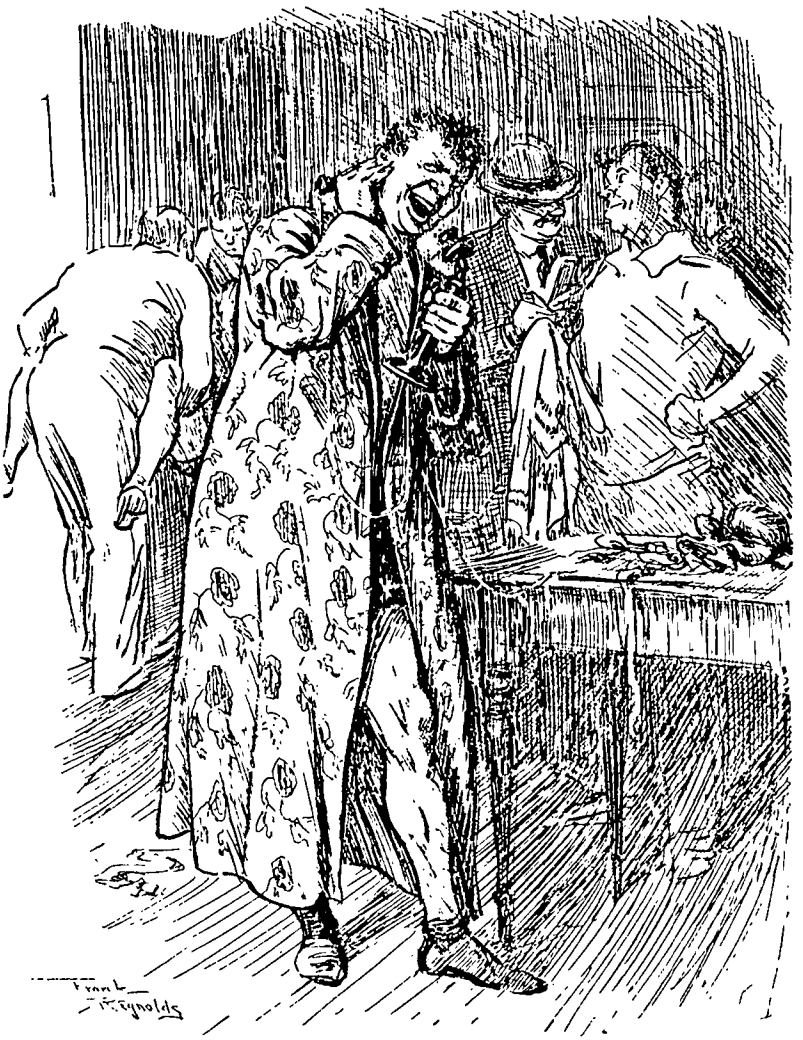
Ecstaticised flounders
Observe them by dozens,
These record-confounders,
To codfishes cousins ;
The coastguardsmen ribald
Revive with rum-toddies
Their halibut-nibbled
Yet glorious bodies.

The Greeks and Italians,
The Czechs and the Chilians,
They come by battalions,
By thousands and millions ;
They calmly examine
The horse-marines' stables ;
They drop bread-and-jam in
The joints of the cables.

Will no one police 'em,
The strong, the rapacious ?
Van Tromp with his besom
Was not so audacious.
It makes my blood tingle.
Ho ! Frenchmen, our neighbours,
Come forth on the shingle
And greet them with sabres. EVOE

HIS PART

FOOTBALL FAN (*just returned from Cup-tie*). "Yes, we won all right—scored in the last minute. Old Clark took a lovely pass, so I sings out, 'Let 's 'ave one, Nobby!' an' I think 'e must 'ave 'eard me."



PUGILIST (*telling his wife the result*). "O.K.! K.O.!"

SECOND (*producing mirror*). " 'Ave a decco, Charlie, an' see wot 'e's bin a-doin' to yer."

THE NEW APPRECIATION

WIFE (*habituée of the Ring, gazing after stranger who has knocked her husband down*). "That was a lovely upper-cut he gave you, George. I wonder who he is?"

Oxford and Cambridge

BARBARA is Cambridge; so Timothy, who is four years younger, has to be Oxford.

At one time I cherished the belief that my daughter's choice was founded on family tradition. "That's the right spirit," I said when it was first announced. "Father was at Cambridge, you know." (Some day, perhaps, I shall wean myself of that ridiculous habit, when addressing my progeny, of referring to myself in the third person.)

"And did you win the Boat Race?" asked Barbara.

My thoughts went back to a "getting-on" boat which ever so many years ago, with my assistance, failed to get on. Briefly I explained to Barbara that the Cambridge boat of those days found itself able to dispense with my services.

"Why?" she demanded.

"Oh, well you know, there's only room for eight rowers in the boat, and I expect they didn't think Father good enough."

I felt myself quite unable to meet the openly incredulous stare that greeted this avowal; a small child's simple faith in its parent's prowess will sometimes bring a blush even to the most parental cheek.

"But couldn't you go as a passenger?" she persisted; and that again brought back poignant memories of a certain coach who used to exercise a

mordant wit at my expense. I switched the conversation into another channel by asking Barbara why she favoured Cambridge.

" Because Patricia Ermyntrude looks simply delicious in light blue," was the prompt reply. Patricia Ermyntrude, it is perhaps unnecessary to explain, has a china face.

* * * * * * *

The Boat Race as it is rowed in the nursery differs in some material points from the contest with which the general public is familiar. The craft in which the crews sit, and which bear a strong resemblance to milliners' boxes, are propelled by pressure of the hands upon the floor, accompanied by a simultaneous forward jerk of the whole body. At the word of command one boat starts from Putney and the other from Mortlake, and the finishing-post is somewhere in the neighbourhood of Chiswick. Oxford frequently capsizes, but—to its credit be it said—never cries ; nor is it put out of humour by the fact that Cambridge always wins.

After watching, by invitation, several successive races of this kind, I made the well-meant suggestion that Oxford should receive a start, or that at least Cambridge should carry weight for age in the form of a cargo of bricks. The idea met with emphatic opposition on the part of the only crew that was capable of arguing it.

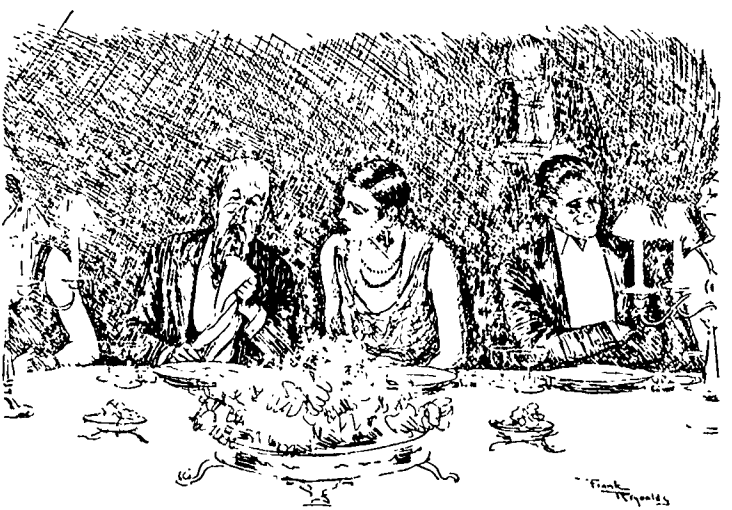
FATHER (*under cross-examination*). "I caught one about ten pounds."
SMALL BOY (*really impressed*). "What a whopper!"
MOTHER (*stern but sceptical*). "You mustn't doubt your father's fishing exploits, Freddy."

REFEREE. "If I have to warn one of you people again I'll—er—d-do so."

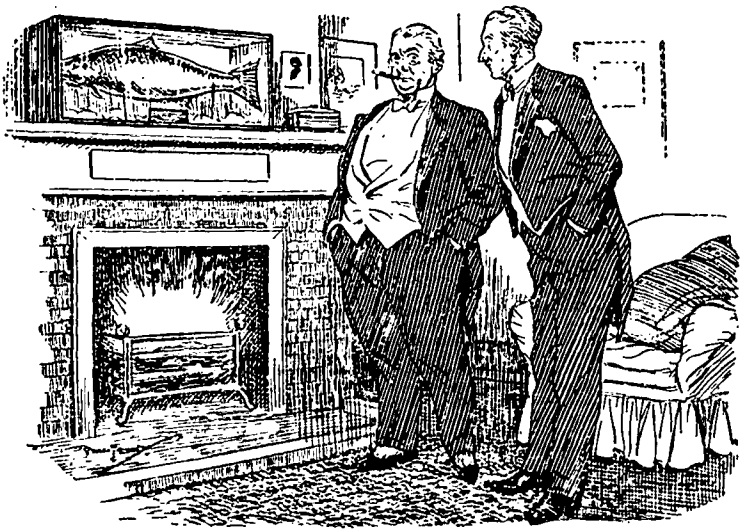
OUR VILLAGE SPORTS

STEWARD (*as competitor staggers in at finish of mile race*). "You're in the three-mile, ain't you? Hurry up; they're ready to start!"

PURELY DEFENSIVE BATSMAN. "I say, I don't mind your crowding in, but need you breathe so hard?"



LADY (*keen on tennis, to dull neighbour*). "Have you been to Wimbledon?"
DULL NEIGHBOUR. "Yes. I once saw a review of the Volunteers there."



GUEST (*to angler Host*). "Your biggest catch, I suppose?"
ANGLER HOST. "No. I presented my biggest to the club. This one was found in its stomach."

" Certainly not," said Barbara firmly. " Why, Oxford might win."

It was with the notion of inducing in Barbara a more sportsmanlike attitude towards the greatest sporting event of the year that I took her down to Putney to watch the practice. After but a short delay I got her past a Punch-and-Judy show on the tow-path, and, having bought specimens of six different kinds of light-blue favours (all of which she insisted on my wearing), we arrived at the boat-houses just in time to see Cambridge take the water. I was prepared for observations on the generous display of heroic limbs afforded as the boat was carried down the slope, but all Barbara said at this stage was, " How funny you must have looked in those little knicker-bockers when you were at Cambridge ! "—a remark that drew the gaze of several eyes to my self-conscious legs.

I explained with great clearness the functions of the coach's launch, and then my heart gave a jump as with exquisite rhythm eight sky-blue blades flashed in and out of the water. After a minute's row, in which I counted 10—19—36, they easied, while the coach held forth through a megaphone.

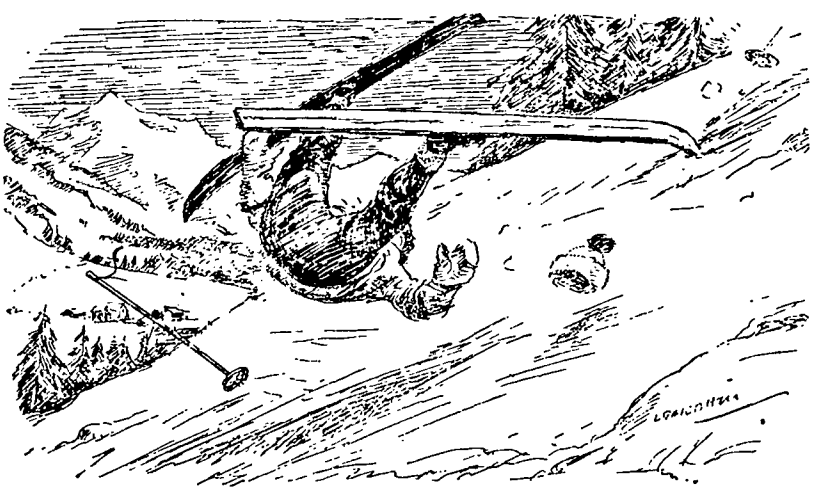
" Well, Cambridge won, didn't they ? " said Barbara.

" Won what ? "

SHOPMAN (*to nervous customer, who has asked for a hat to shoot in*). "I can recommend our celebrated grouse helmet, Sir."

NERVOUS CUSTOMER. "Yes, b-but will that do for shooting rabbits?"

THE SILENT CRITIC



EXTRACT FROM CORRESPONDENCE OF OBSCURE PERSON IN SWITZERLAND.—"Don't be surprised if you see my photograph in one of the Society papers."

"Is the fish pleased, mother?"
"No, dear—certainly not."
"Then why does it wag its tail?"

" Won the race. The motor-boat never caught them up at all."

So once more I explained what the launch was for, and meanwhile the boat moved on again.

" What's the man with the trumpet playing now ? " was the next question I had to answer.

" He's saying, ' Bow, you're late,' " I hazarded out of the store of my memory. " ' Bow ' is the man in the front part of the boat."

" Then he can't help getting there first ; so how could he be late ? "

" I don't suppose he really was, but they *will* say that," I replied with just a shade of bitterness. " When Father was up at Cambridge bow was *always* told he was late, though all the time that ass Rogers at three——"

" What's he saying now ? " interrupted Barbara.

I drew still further on my own experiences until Oxford came out and proceeded towards Hammersmith at a strong but leisurely paddle. Barbara watched them with a critical and contemptuous eye.

" Well, anybody can see they can't row half as fast as Cambridge," she observed. " Now, let's go back and see the Punch-and-Judy."

* * * * * * *

Next day I found that the nursery operations had been reorganised. There was now only one milliner's box, plentifully decorated with Light Blue

"Come on—'urry up with that new cross-barl"

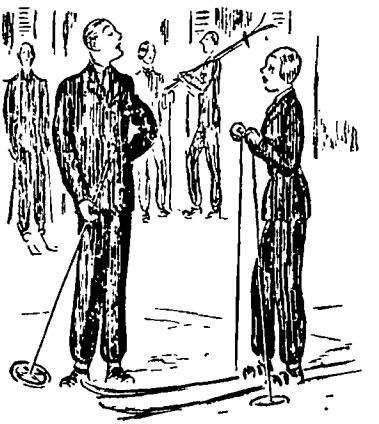
favours, which was propelled by Timothy, while Barbara from an overturned stool shouted opprobrious remarks to him through an improvised megaphone :—

" Bow, you're late ! When will you learn to be earlier, you stupid boy ? Use those *legs* ! Oh, Timmy, dear, if you *won't* keep your eyes in the boat I'm afraid you'll have to be Oxford again."

* * * * * * *

Well, it looks like being a close race on Saturday, and, if the worst happens, Timothy will at least be avenged. In that event I'm quite prepared to see Barbara and Patricia Ermyntrude both change colour, for aesthetic prejudice is but a flimsy foundation on which to rear a party faith.

Fashion Hints for Winter-Sport Novices



At Mürren a strict orthodoxy is *de rigueur*.

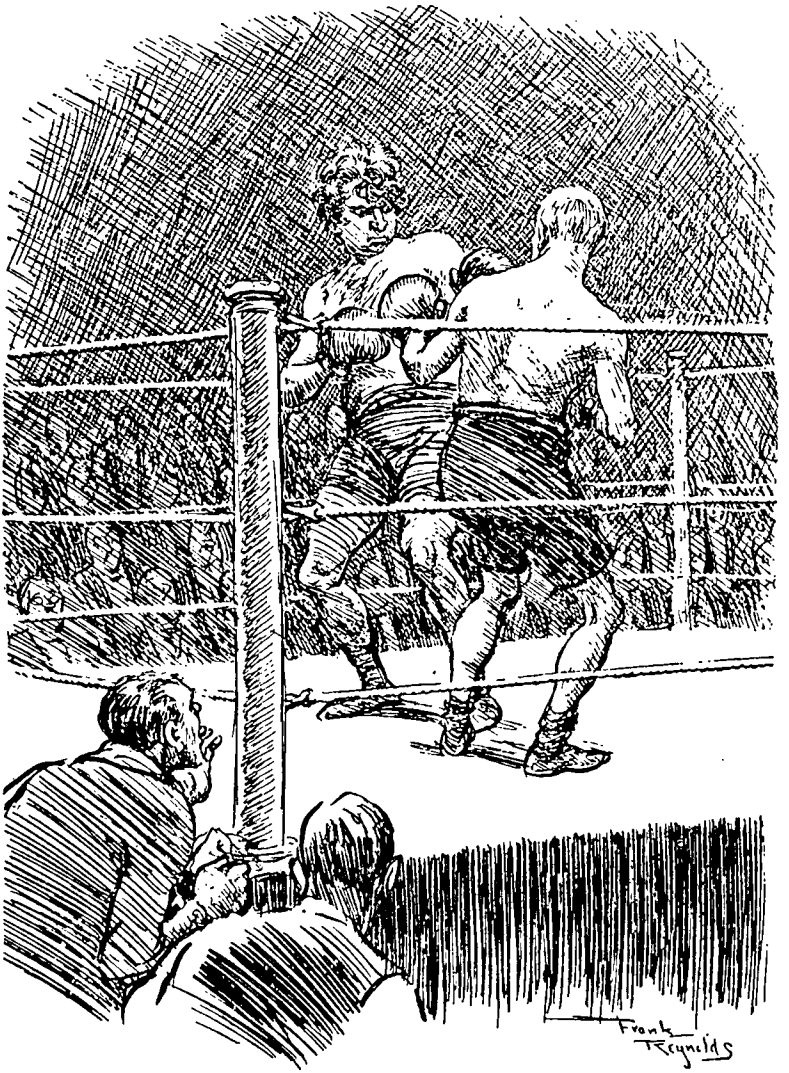
At Wengen a certain laxity is permissible.

While at St. Moritz you can wear anything you d—— well please.

HIS FIANCÉE (*during interval*). "Tell me, Jim, who's the tall handsome fellow with curly hair that keeps knocking you down?"

THE GENERAL. "Hah! so you're to be my partner to-day?"
NEW MEMBER OF BADMINTON CLUB. "Pleased, I'm sure. May I ask why you carry three rackets?"
THE GENERAL. "Well, you see, I'm rather short-sighted and generally break one or two on my partner during the game."

VISITOR. "What's the favourite fly in these parts, boy?"
BOY. "A Worrm."



EXCITED SECOND (*to Cockney opposing Italian*). "Set abaht 'im, 'Erbert. 'E looks big, but it's mostly ice-cream."

"A Little Bit of Blue"

WHEN the waves rise high and higher
as they toss about together,
And the March-winds, loosed and
angry, cut your chilly heart in two,
Here are eighteen gallant gentlemen who
come to face the weather
All for valour and for honour and a
little bit of blue!

Chorus

Oh get hold of it and shove it!
It is labour, but you love it;
Let your stroke be long and mighty;
keep your body on the swing;
While your pulses dance a
measure
Full of pride and full of
pleasure,
And the boat flies free and joyous like a
swallow on the wing.

Isis blessed her noble youngsters as they
left her; Father Camus
Sped his youths to fame and Putney
from his grey and ancient
Courts:
"Keep," they said, "the old traditions,
and we know you will not shame us
When you try the stormy tideway in
your zephyrs and your shorts.

"For it's toil and tribulation till your
roughnesses are polished,
And it's bitterness and sorrow till the
work of oars is done;
But it's high delight and triumph when
your faults are all abolished,

REFEREE. "Free kick!" PLAYERS. "Who for?"
REFEREE (*absent-mindedly*). "Us!"

INCOMING BATSMAN (*to Deep Field*). "Er—am I going right for the wicket, please?"

With yourself and seven brothers
firmly welded into one."

So they stood the weary trial and the
people poured to greet them,
Filled a cup with praise and welcome—
it was theirs to take and quaff ;
And they ranged their ships alongside,
and the umpire came to meet them,
And they stripped themselves and
waited till his pistol sent them off.

With a dash and spurt and rally ; with a
swing and drive and rattle,
Both the boats went flashing faster as
they cleft the swelling stream ;
And the old familiar places, scenes of
many a sacred battle,
Just were seen for half a moment and
went by them in a dream.

But at last the flag has fallen and the
splendid fight is finished,
And the victory is blazoned on the
record-roll of Fame.
They are spent and worn and broken,
but their soul is undiminished ;
There are winners now and losers, but
their glory is the same !

Chorus

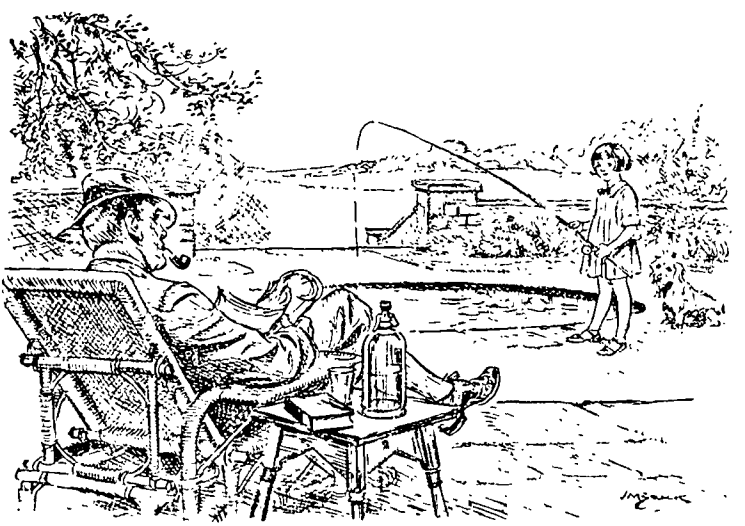
Oh get hold of it and shove it !
It is labour, but you love it ;
Let your stroke be long and mighty ;
keep your body on the swing ;
While your pulses dance a
measure
Full of pride and full of
pleasure,
And the boat flies free and joyous like a
swallow on the wing.

R. C. L.

PRESS PHOTOGRAPHER (*to Channel swimmer*). "Before you start I should like to get one of you landing."

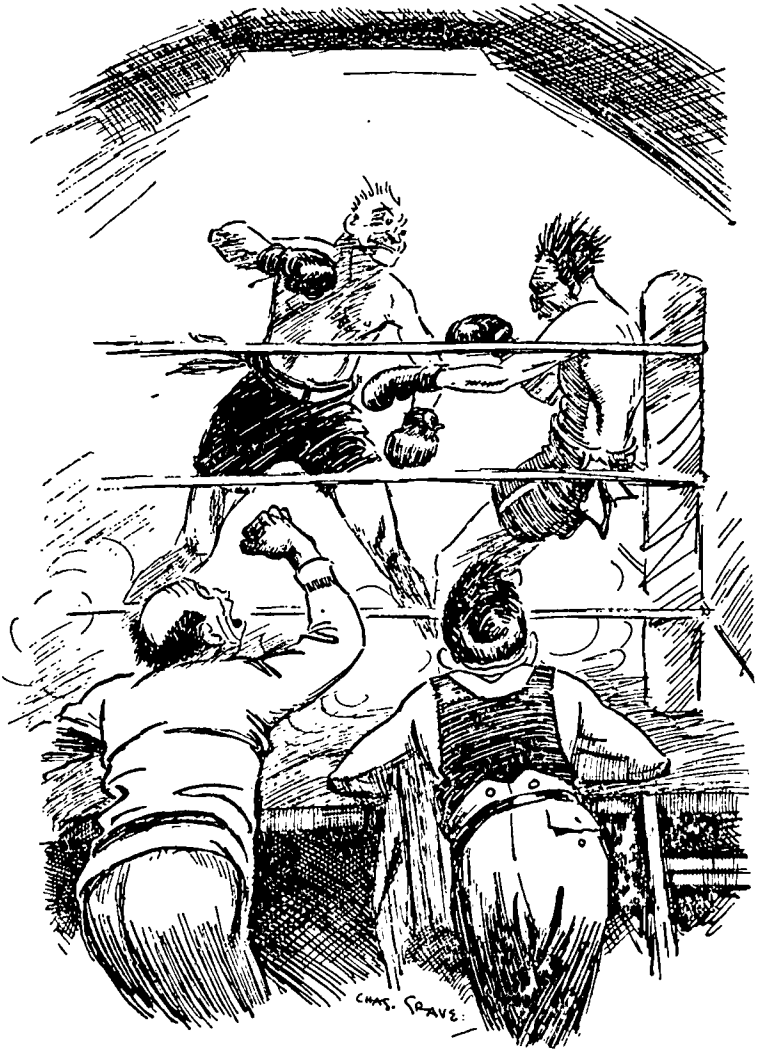
ARDENT ANGLER (*who has just spotted a rise*). "S-s-s—sh-h-h!!!"

LODGER (*to exorbitant landlady*). "I say, I wish you'd come and score for us in our cricket-match to-morrow."

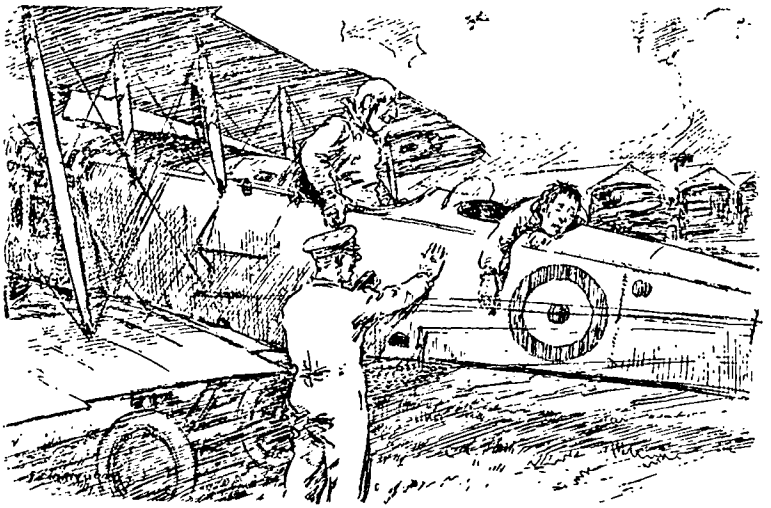


"Daddy, will the fish mind if I stop now? It's nearly lunch-time."

"I must ask you not to hang about here."
"And 'oo might you be?"
"I 'm the secretary of this club."
"Oh, are yer? Well, that ain't the way to get members."



EXCITED SECOND (*to sorely-stricken pugilist*). "Don't be frivolous abaht it, 'Erbert. You've got 'im beat if you'll only take it seriously."



PILOT (*just landed from a very bumpy flight*). "By Jove, you were not strapped in, you might have fallen out!"
PASSENGER (*collapsed*). "It wouldn't have mattered."

Are You Air-minded?

"OOH, look!" said Janet; "it's flying on its back and wriggling."

"Horrible," I said with a shudder.

"We all went up in one yesterday, you know."

"Yes—er—I believe you mentioned it."

"You're the only one who's never been up."

"Oh, by the way," I said, detecting the trend of the conversation, "I forgot to mention it—I notice the glass hasn't gone down this morning."

"You're not afraid, are you?" Janet went on.

"It looks as though it may quite easily be another fine day," I murmured; but I knew I was lost.

"You *are* afraid," said Janet—"you're afraid to go up in an aeroplane."

I was silent for a while. I glanced at the inverted infernal machine above. "They don't do any funny business like that, do they?" I asked.

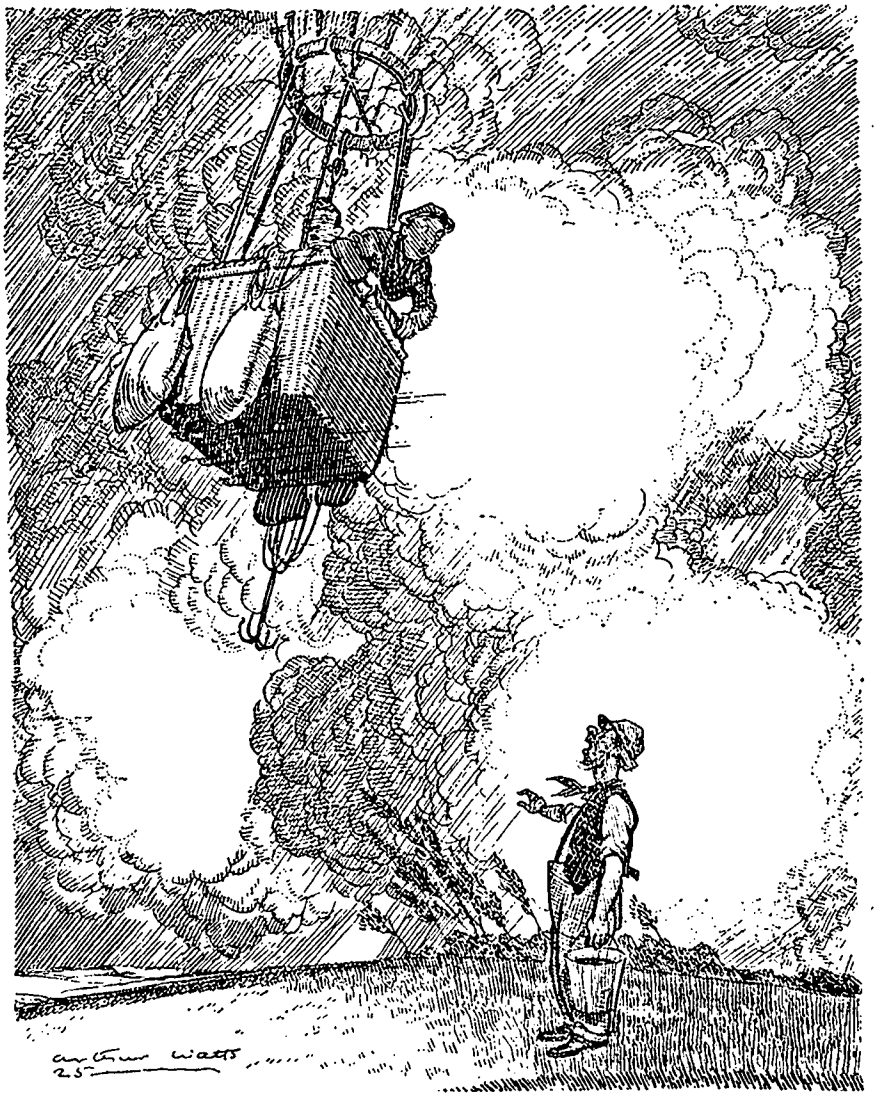
"Of course not, silly. It's all perfectly straightforward—like being in a tram. You can either fly over the land or the sea—you pays your money and you takes your choice."

* * * * * * *

It wasn't *my* choice I was taking as I crawled into a little seat in an extremely flimsy piece of flying-machinery. But a taunt is, when all is said

PILOT. "What on earth is Mr. Jones doing up there at this time of night? Looping the loop?"

MECHANIC. "Oh, I expect 'e's just seen the new moon, Sir, and 'e's turning 'is money over. Very superstitious, Mr. Jones!"



BALLOONIST (*drifting at the mercy of the gale*). "Hi! Are we anywhere near Cambridge?" RUSTIC. "No. You want to turn sharp to the right."

FIRST LADY (*at a local championship meeting*). "I don't understand very much about the game myself; do you?"
SECOND LADY. "No; but my sister-in-law 'as just moved into 'er new 'ouse an' they've got a much bigger court than this."

and done, a taunt ; a slur, however you look at it, can only be regarded as a slur.

They started the propeller, which made a nasty whirring noise and caused a fierce wind to blow all round me. It nearly blew Janet away as she ran up to the aeroplane and handed me a black object.

"Here," she said, "take this. It'll be interesting to see what Mrs. Tummly-Woddle looks like if you turn the camera on to her from above."

"It'll be interesting to see what she looks like," I said moodily, "if I drop the camera on to her from above," and I popped down quickly out of the gale.

The pilot was climbing into his seat in front of me. I hoped he understood just what kind of a flight I wanted—nice and slow and not too far off the ground. To make certain I called out to him, "No funny business!"

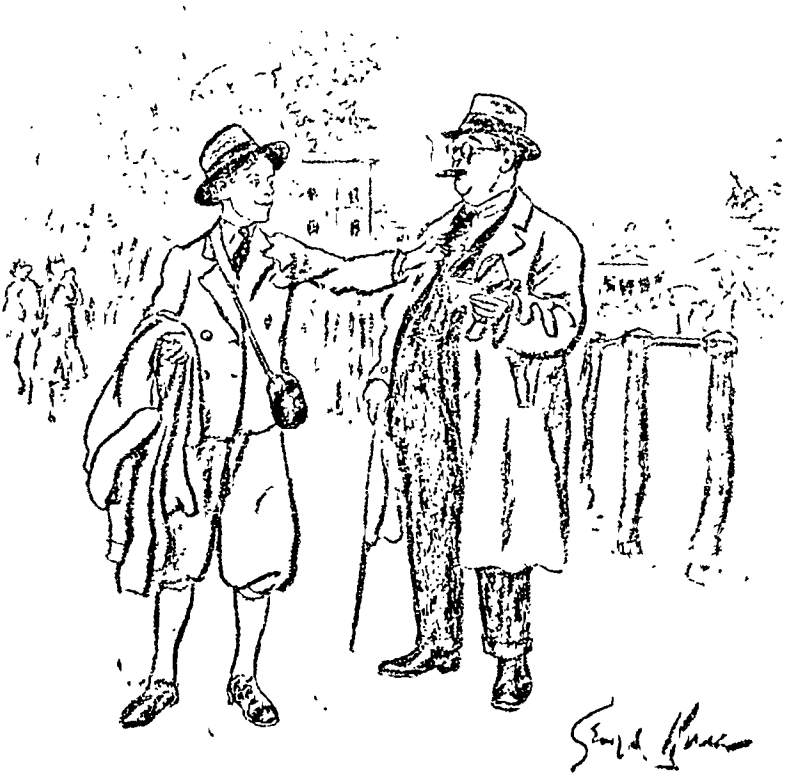
My voice was drowned in a deafening roar as he stepped on the gas, or whatever you step on in an aeroplane.

We were soon rising steadily above the little seaside town of Juneford. Gripping the camera tightly and holding it over the side, I aimed blindly and pressed the trigger. When the photo came out it revealed the top of the larger of Juneford's gasometers, but if it had shown the snow-plume of Everest I couldn't have been more proud of it.

CHATTY STRANGER. "What sport?"
ANGLER. "Fishin'."

When we had been flying for about five minutes the pilot turned round and made a waggling gesture with his forefinger. I looked at him with what was probably a completely blank expression and wondered what he meant. Although he was only three feet away from me it was quite impossible to make even the loudest shout heard above the rush of the propeller. He repeated his gesture and, supposing he meant that the view was pretty extensive from up there, I nodded my agreement. Actually what he *did* mean, as I was shortly to learn, was: Did I want to loop the loop?

We climbed until I could trace the coast-line for miles and the big steamers looked like match-stalks on the sea. Again the pilot turned round to me and



AMERICAN VISITOR IN HYDE PARK. "Say, Pop, here's a dirt-track for horses."

made another gesture, this time pointing to his middle. Possibly it is true that terror sharpens the wits. Something had at any rate sharpened mine sufficiently for me to understand what he meant this time. He meant that I was to see that the safety-strap was properly adjusted. I looked and found it wasn't. Not only was it not adjusted—it wasn't there.

"Oi!" I shouted, but you could have heard a pin drop in a thunderstorm as easily as my voice. Suddenly the aeroplane swooped and, gathering speed, dived sickeningly, nose downwards.

Clenching my teeth, I held my camera in one hand and the side of the aeroplane with the other. My heart struck my uvula a savage blow. I felt

THE WIFE (*bitterly*). "Yes, it makes a nice outin' for me, don't it—settin' in the rain all day guardin' a tin o' worms?"

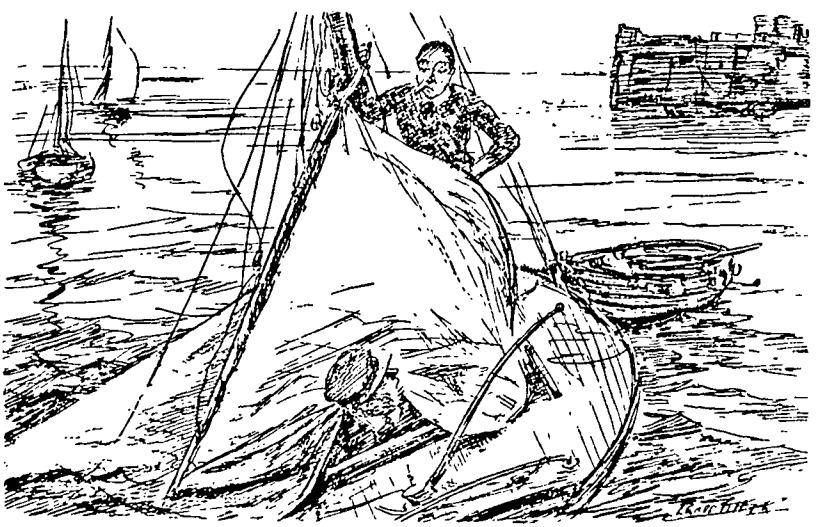
myself being pressed hard into the seat as the aeroplane took the upward curve of the loop, and watched the earth come slowly round into a position somewhere above me. It was interesting to see a bird's-eye view of Juneford laid out like an elaborate pattern on the ceiling. It was also interesting to note that there was now a space of about a couple of inches between me and the seat, a space which was tending to widen. I hovered, head-down, floating in space. As the aeroplane came round on the downward curve of the loop my heart dropped back into my stomach and I was astonished to find that the seat came up to receive me.

The pilot turned round and a grin showed among the goggles and leather trappings of his helmet. In response, thankful it was over, I managed to bare my teeth back at him. Actually I ought not to have done this because he seemed to regard it as a challenge; and immediately we were climbing up again to the higher altitudes.

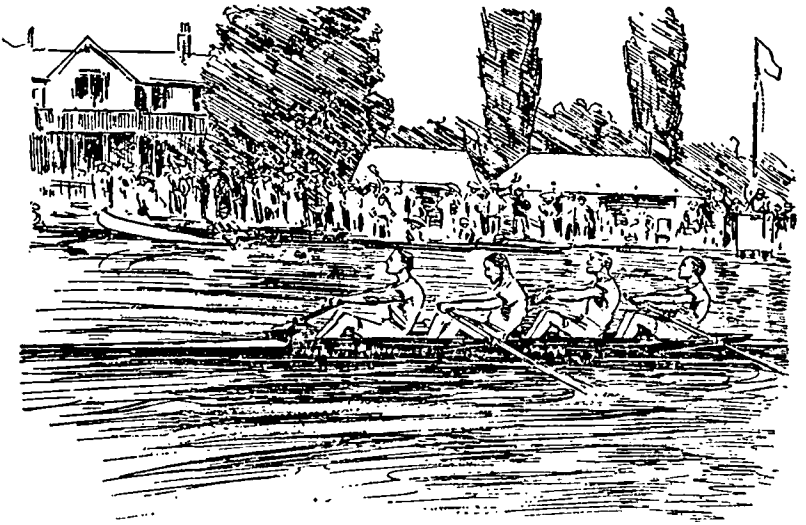
We zoomed up at a steepening angle until suddenly the roar of the engine died and the aeroplane seemed to stand on its tail motionless in the air. I saw the horizon swaying absurdly and felt the whole craft lurch violently and topple earthward in a spinning nose-dive, Juneford revolving dizzily below.

OWNER OF PRAM DINGHY. "What d' you think of my boat?"
FRIEND. "Where did you pinch it? Off a roundabout?"

OWNER. "My dear chap, it's quite all right. *I'll* tell you when she's goin' over."



FRIEND. "Now if you'd taken my advice and bought a motor-boat instead of this footlin' yacht this simply couldn't have happened."



The River as it appears to the Winners of an easy Race.

As it appears to the Losers of a hard Race.

THE YOUNG 'UN. "Come on, it's an easy one! Lummy, I could run two."
THE OLD 'UN. "Could yer? Then just run back again."

Above the scream of the wind through the wires I could hear myself gasping for breath through my clenched teeth. It was a nasty sound. Incredibly, just before the church-spire impaled us we were flying on an even keel again. Nothing, I knew, would coax a smile out of me now. When the pilot looked round for approval I should frown darkly at him.

Neither the feeling of stomachless nausea I was experiencing nor the fear that the aeroplane would probably come to pieces in mid-air troubled me half as much as the knowledge that when I landed my face would be a nasty green colour. In addition my hair would probably have turned white, and the colour-scheme, though striking, might border too much on the supernatural to go well with the suit I was wearing.

Taking my approval for granted, the pilot took me into the blue again, and when we had reached a great height silenced the thundering of the propeller so that we stalled and tumbled sideways out of the sky, fluttering like a falling leaf. The earth reared into a vertical position on the weather bow and rushed like a wall to meet us. Green fields swung playfully, visible now over my left shoulder, now over my right.

It was curious how rapidly we fell. As I clung like a limpet to the aeroplane, hurtling earthwards, I saw the fourth green of the Juneford Golf Club expanding like magic. A man in plus-fours grew suddenly from a mere

VISITOR (*from the home of baseball*). "Well, I'm glad I've seen cricket. I've seen St. Paul's and the Abbey, and they are good goods. But, when it comes to hush and the subdued atmosphere, old cricket's got 'em beat."

"Valse Fantastique" as we have seen it performed by perfect strangers on the spur of the moment.

speck to life-size. I could see the glint of his putter. It seemed a pity that he must be slain before he holed out. With my heart pounding in my stomach I glanced at the pilot. He was bending forward motionless. Perhaps he had fainted. Possibly he had forgotten what to do next. Perhaps he just didn't care. . . .

A second before the impact the pilot woke up, did the right things, and made the engine roar again so that we flew away unharmed. I looked back and saw the man in plus-fours miss a short putt. I wondered if he realised how much more he'd missed.

I stepped out of the machine a shaking bundle of nerves.

" Enjoy it ? " asked the pilot.

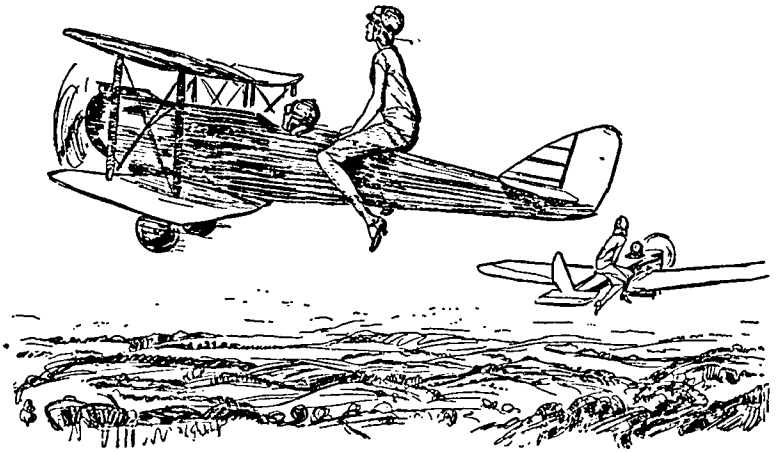
" Rather ! " I lied, wiping a little cold sweat off my forehead.

Fortunately Janet wasn't there yet, and as I waited for her I overheard a scrap of conversation between two pilots.

" Some of the passengers don't know some of the risks," said one.

" No," said the other. " Ignorance is bliss ; they wouldn't be quite so perky if they knew what we know."

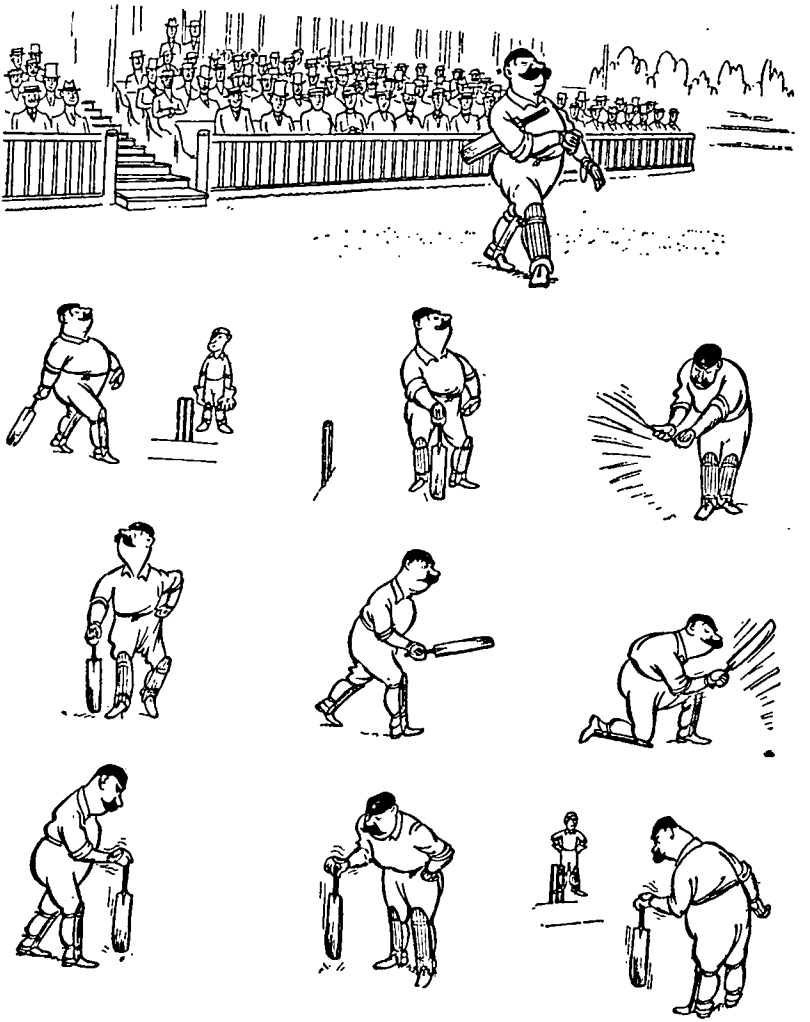
In my opinion some of the pilots don't know some of the passengers.



THE PILLION GIRL: NEXT STEP

IMPORTANT PERSONAGE (*welcoming aviator*). "What a marvellous engine you have! We didn't hear you coming."

AVIATOR. "Guess we were travelling some. The sound will be along in about ten minutes."



It's All in the Game

It's All in the Game

"W-wha' round was tha'?"
"The first."

OWNER. "You let the whole bloomin' field walk over you."
JOCKEY. "Well, whatcher expec' with a horse called 'Turkey Carpet'?"

Songs of a Sub-man

I Heard a Hiker Singing

I HEARD a hiker singing
At dawning of the day,
When all the bells were ringing
The drowsy night away.
When up the sun was springing
And pale had grown the moon,
I heard a hiker singing,
And singing out of tune.

I heard a hiker singing;
He sang to call his mate,
While all the birds were winging
Aloft at Heaven's gate.
While all the flowers were flinging
Their perfume to the sky
I heard him pass me singing;
He sang and passed me by.

I long to be a hiker
And hike o'er dale and hill,
As Jonah said to Micah
The day the Whale was ill;
But I was cramped by custom;
My limbs have grown too fat;
I dare no more entrust 'em
To treatment such as that.

I was not born to grapple
With hail and sleet and snow;
I have an Adam's apple
I do not care to show;
I shrink from wind and weather;
I wear a bowler-hat;
My boots are patent-leather
And both my feet are flat.

REPORTER. "And when you shouted 'Foul' what happened?"
REFEREE. "Somebody said 'Drink this!'"

I was not born a hiker,
  Like other men I know,
As Jonah said to Micah
  So many years ago.
Here or in Arizona,
  At Streatham or at sea,
A passenger like Jonah
  Is all I want to be.

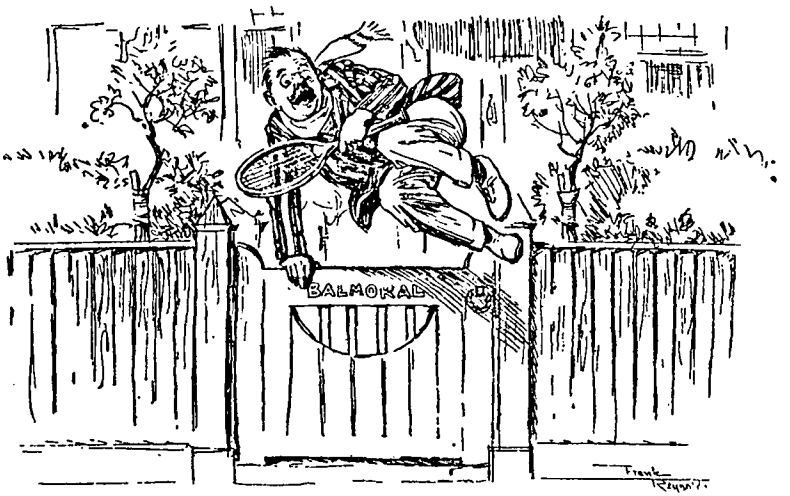
I heard a hiker singing,
  I did not heed his song,
Though loud his voice was ringing
  And all his notes were wrong,

O hiker, forward swinging
  Your limbs so fair and fit,
Strange hiker, cease your singing—
  I do not care for it!

O hiker, cease your singing,
  Your singing harsh and high,
Though loud your call is ringing
  I will not heed it, I.
Hike whomsoe'er you like with,
  Or hike alone and free;
Whoever else you hike with,
  You shall not hike with me.

DECEMBER: THE INVINCIBLES

"Leaving home for the City is one thing—



But—oh, tennis!"

SPORTSMAN. "Want a good tip for to-day, Antonio?"

ANTONIO. "Tanks! I 'ave 'ad some. Antonio no longer back-a de gee—just back-a de nut."

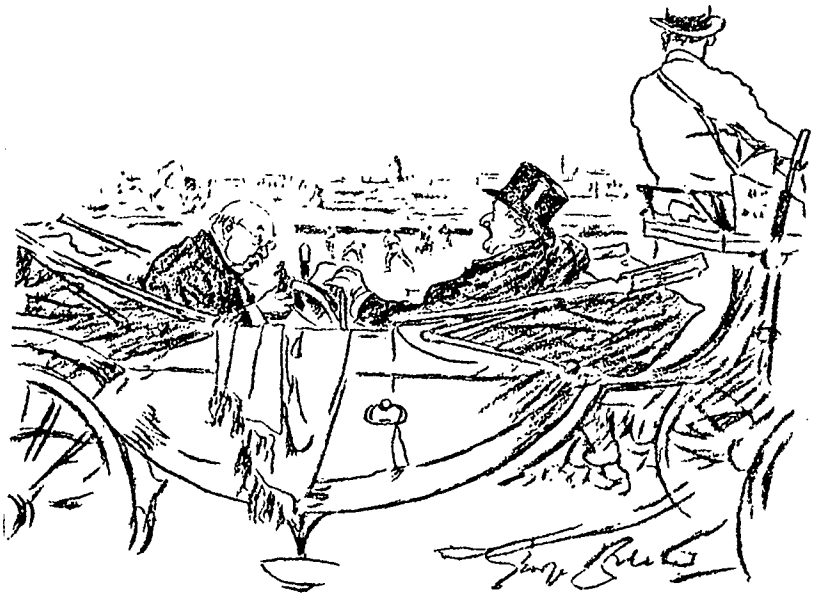
"Look at them all looking for the ball, and that boy over there has got it all the time!"

The Rock-climber

THERE are four chief requisites for the great British pastime of rock-climbing: suitable scenery; proper equipment; an hotel that caters for people who insist on climbing rocks; and well-developed and prehensile fingers and thumbs.

Choice of terrain ought to be considered, although experts care little where they go. The Fen districts in Cambridge and Lincolnshire and the suburbs of our larger cities should be avoided if possible, and the gorges of Mount Clamba-Clamba or the Andes take some little time to reach. Perhaps a happy medium between these two extremes is the best.

The equipment of the rock-climber should be very carefully thought out before he embarks on an expedition. Normal clothes in a rock-climbers' hotel are not usual. A neat fustian Norfolk jacket, with elastic straps instead of buttons, and flexible armpits, makes a very good impression, and an accordion-pleated waistcoat of grey plush for evening wear adds to the general appearance. Knickerbockers should be of astrachan, with detachable celluloid cuffs below the knees. Shirts and vests should be wire-wove and reversible, and should button down the back; and stockings should be knitted



GENTLEMEN *v.* PLAYERS

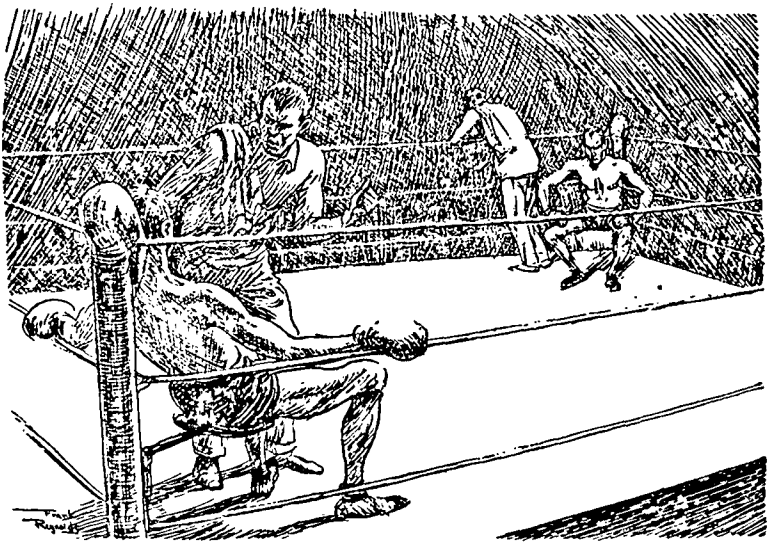
PAVILION HABITUÉ TO FRIEND. "Marvellous catch! I remember one just like it in the Varsity Match of '66."

FRIEND. "Aren't you thinking of '67?"

PAVILION HABITUÉ. "I daresay; my memory is getting shocking."

from the wool of the llama or billybear. These articles can be obtained from most rock-climbing outfitters. Shrapnel helmets were worn after the war-period in order to guard against falling crags, but this armour is no longer obligatory, and headgear is often dispensed with altogether if the hair curls naturally.

The boots of the rock-climber are the most important part of his equipment, and they should be especially made for him. The soles require careful adjustment; they should consist of thin slabs of asbestos, crêpe-rubber, leather and bitumen in successive layers, with a fringe of large nails round the rims. A steel comb is often fixed to the toecap of each boot for regripping mountains when dangling in mid air. This comb will be found to be very convenient, as it can be utilised for the toilette and for concerts in the hotel drawing-room. Round the waist and under the coat should be worn some two hundred yards of fine Manilla rope tied in a clove hitch, and fixed with a neat gold safety-pin; on no account should this portion of the equip-



SECOND. "Don't kid yerself about this bloke; 'e may look like a ''as been,' but 'e ain't one of the 'never was-ers'; 'e's a 'still is-er.'"

ment be removed day or night. A hatchet should also be carried to deal with ice-slopes and waiters.

Novices should never attempt to enter a rock-climbers' hotel without a guide. Such a practice is always made the object of remark. The whole party should be well roped together under an experienced leader before leaving the railway-station, and steps should be cut where necessary on the way to the hotel. As soon as they have arrived at the rock-climbers' headquarters and engaged rooms, a short section of frieze-moulding should be booked in the smoke-room. This length of moulding allows the whole party to dangle from their finger-tips or thumbs against the walls after dinner. Many rock-climbing visitors will be seen after meals in this position strengthening their grip and sleeping at the same time. They should on no account be cut down or interfered with in any way. Doorways are also eagerly sought after in the evenings, to be climbed up, chimney fashion, with a series of jerks, the back and feet being pressed against the interior of the door-frame. It is usual to partake of coffee at the top. Doorways are invariably regarded as being free to all, and they cannot be booked in advance.

Discussions on climbing (introducing gullies, the art of colouring alpen-stocks, hob-nailed boots, *arêtes*, ice-cliffs, suitable socks and their makers and pet ropes) should be carried on by all during their stay. Many climbers have

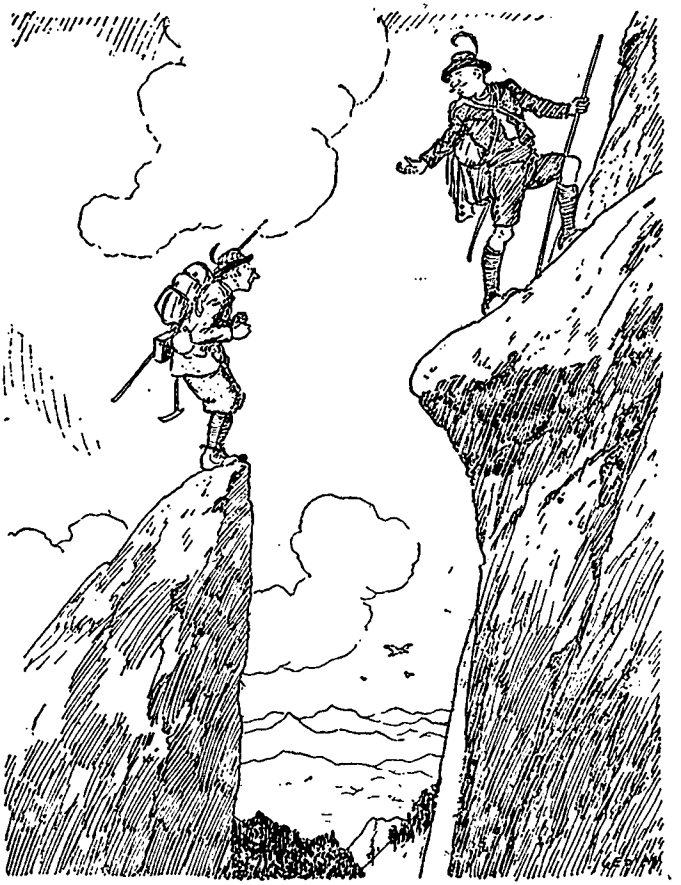
"Now, you see, as I told you, it would have been practically impossible to bring the car round this way."

PLAYER (*indignantly to huge referee*). "Why don't yer give a foul against some'un yer own size?"

had their ropes for years, indeed ever since they were little pieces of string, and it is often advisable to admire and stroke the pet ropes of other visitors even if secretly disliking their coils and texture. The pairing time for Manilla ropes is early in September.

After a day or two of careful attention to these details and discussions with other rock-climbers, it will be hardly necessary to attempt any neighbouring peak outside the hotel smoke-room or lounges. Such extra effort would be most inconvenient, because luncheon is at 1.30 P.M. and it usually rains all the time.

As rock-climbers never go to bed at all, but hang about the cornices of the rooms wrapped in ropes, the maximum period for which it is safe to stay at a rock-climbers' hotel is considered by the medical profession to be about six days.



THE SLACKER

"Modern batsmen use far bigger pads than their fathers did," observes a writer. Does he mean writing-pads?

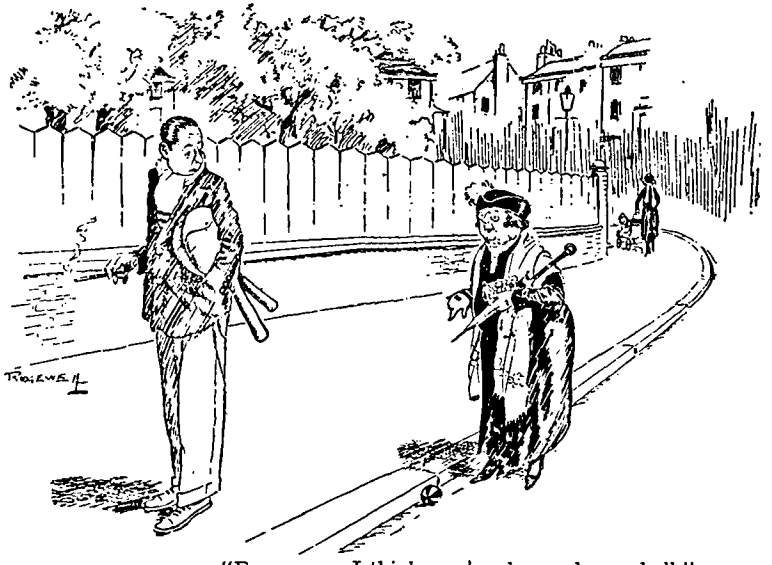
"Mr. —— will give a lecture at ——, on Winter Sports with slides." A very proper accompaniment.

"You can always tell a Kensington girl."
"Yes, but you can't tell her much." (*March 1, 1911*)

AT WONDERLAND

FRIEND OF THE BOY WHO GAVE THE PUNCH (*turning to young man in collar who has criticised aloud*). "'It 'im below the belt, did 'e? Where do you fink 'is belt ought ter be? Rahnd 'is furrid?"

DARE-DEVIL (*to fiancée*). "Yes, and if I took up this gliding, what is the first thing that would happen? A bother with your people. You know how nervous they are."



NICE OLD LADY. "Excuse me, I think you've dropped your ball."

The Man at the Bar

"IF you was Archbishop of Canterbury,
I shouldn't wonder,"
Said the man at the bar,
"If you was the Lord Chief Justice, and,
by blooming thunder,
I dessay you are!
I tell you, it ain't any use for me to go
racin',
For as soon as I gets on a cert,
Flat racin' or hurdlin' or chasin',
That 'orse is dirt.

"There's 'orses I've backed in my time as
were taken with measles
Right on the middle of the course;
I'd safer put money on ferrets, I would,
or on weasels
Nor wot I would on a norse;
There's jockeys turned round in a race
and went back to the stable
An' asked for a cup o' tea,
'Cos why? 'Cos they knew I was on
'em; and none wasn't able
To ride against me.

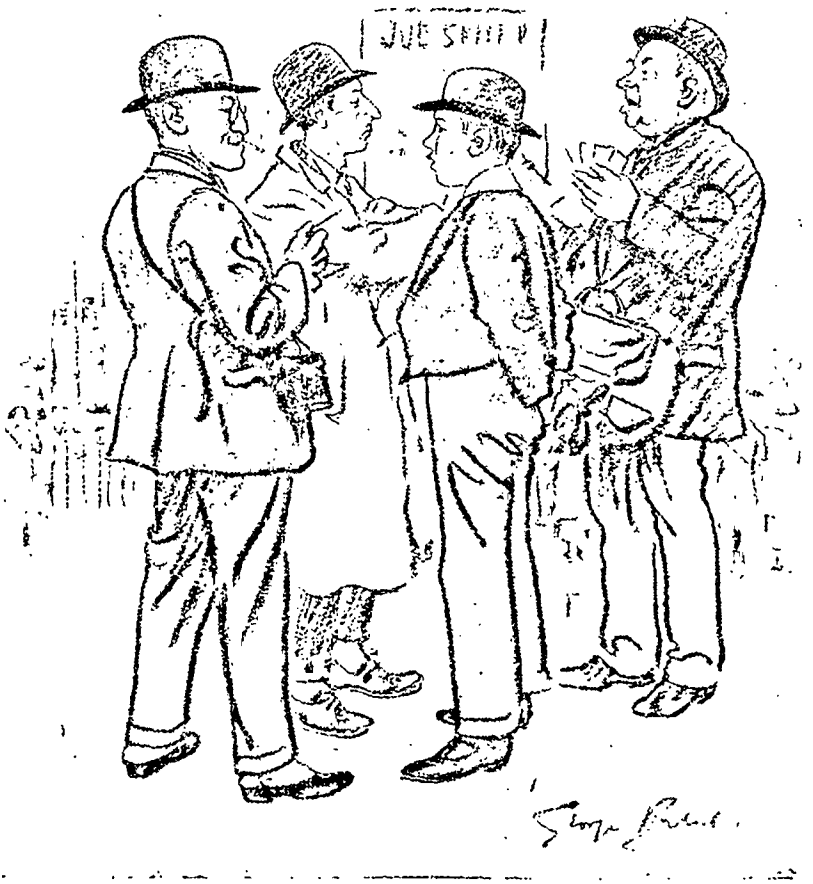
"There was horses were out-and-out
naps from the very beginning,
The papers they all said so,
They said nothing on earth as was foaled
could prevent 'em from winning,
But they didn't know.
There was 'orses could win in their sleep
without waking nor warning
And roll past the judge on their head;
They were scratched, 'cos the owner took
ill on the very same morning
And died in 'is bed.

"I've followed their form, man and boy,
for some forty-two seasons,
An' I'll tell you one thing, my lad,
There's many a tipster will give you a
dozen good reasons

SPORTING GENTLEMAN. "When I back a horse he's scratched, and when I back a dog he stops and scratches himself!"

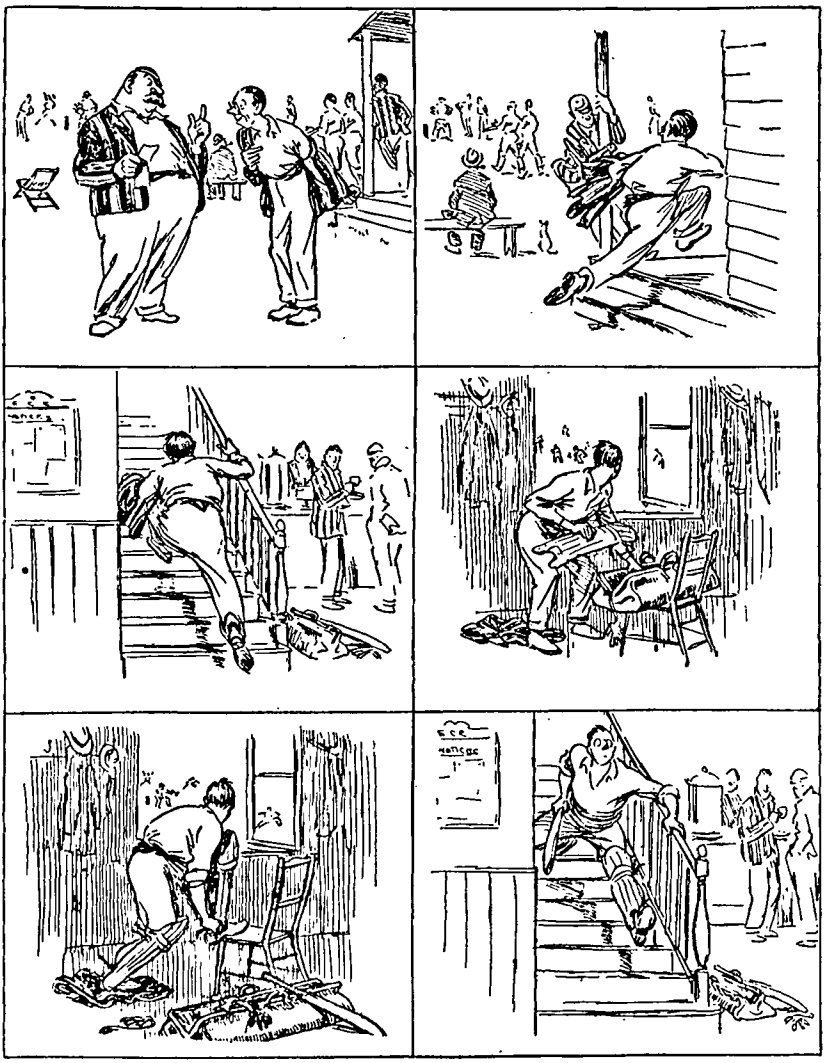
Why horses run bad ;
But there's only one reason which causes
a reg'lar commotion
To trainers and so on ; ho yus !
'Alf Smith on that 'orse ?' says the
bookies, ' well, that's a fine notion !
That's money for us.'

" So whenever you bet on a race, and
there's something you fancies,
Over the sticks or the flat,
You ask what Alf Smith has a quid on
afore taking chances,
And don't bet on that ;
And I'd tell you the same—Here, Missy,
another small brandy !"—
Said the man at the bar,
" If you was the ex-King of Spain at this
moment, or if you was Gandhi ;
And I dessay you are !" EVOE

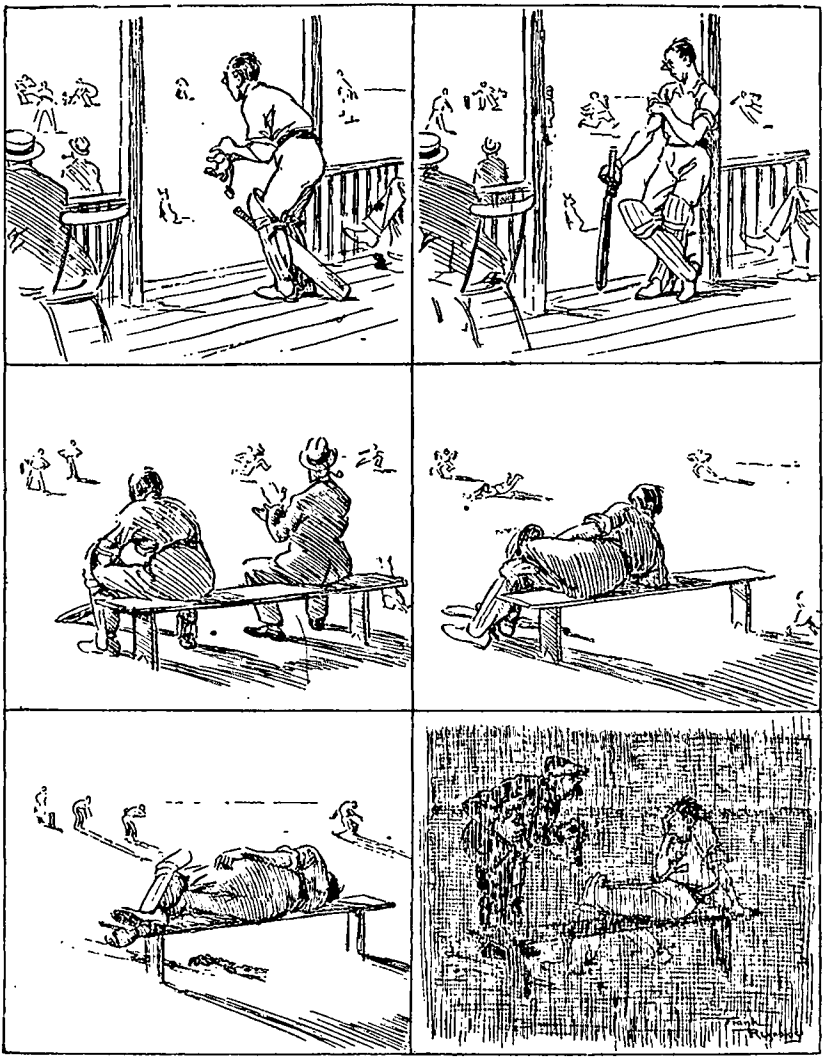


INNOCENT YOUTH. "When you put money on a horse, Dad, whereabouts do you put it?"

FATHER. "In that gentleman's bag, my boy."



First Wicket Down; or, the Chance of a Lifetime



First Wicket Down; or, the Chance of a Lifetime

Of course we think nothing of this sort of thing to-day.

But what if Amelia had played the same sort of game?

Or supposing Lucy had gone all out at croquet—

Or Angelina had broken loose among the toxophilites?

UPHOLDING THE DIGNITY OF THE ENGLISH SCHOOL

Revelry by Night

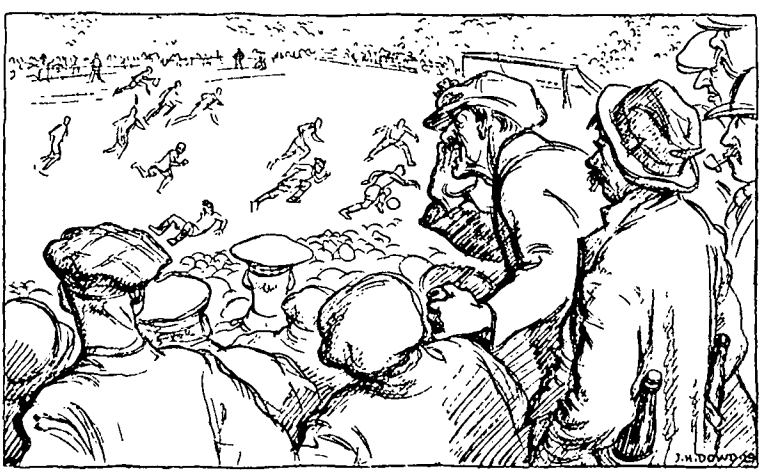
I WAS never very good at Victorian games. I was always one of the earliest to be bumped off at Musical Chairs. Unstable at Honeypots, at Clumps I did not excel. When they had Nuts and May I was seized by a sense of terror, only too well-founded, lest I should be pulled over by some fat and powerful girl and laughed at by all my peers.

Even in the staider, more literary games I was not a success. I was always the one to whom they said, " No, no. *That* isn't what you have to do. Think of an adjective beginning with *p* and ending with *q* that applies to your second neighbour from the left, put it down on a piece of paper, fold the top over, pass it to your third neighbour from the right, and *afterwards* make a noise like a buffalo. You mustn't make a noise like a buffalo *first*."

Everybody else, you see, had been busily writing down adjectives on their bits of paper and passing them rapidly about to each other when my deep tremendous bellow came out all alone. I had anticipated the *clou* of the fun.

When a lot of questions were put into one top-hat and a lot of nouns into another, and a piece of poetry had to be written answering the question and embodying the noun, I was always left blushing at the end, unable to find a rhyme for " treacle " which would also explain how Cock Robin was killed.

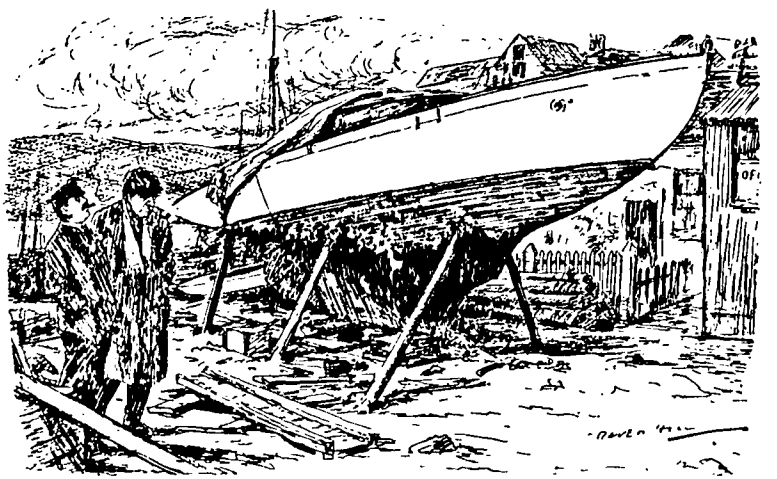
TIMID NOVICE ARRIVES AT WINTER SPORTS HOTEL



DISGUSTED SUPPORTER. "You ought to join one o' them twenty thousand leagues under the sea!"

OUR VILLAGE MATCH

FIRST BATSMAN. "Why can't yer call when you're coming?"
SECOND BATSMAN. "'Cause I don't want to put the fielder on his guard."



OWNER. "Smart little thing, isn't she?"
FRIEND. "Pity she's so ugly below the water-line."
OWNER. "Oh, well, nobody will see that."
FRIEND. "What about when she capsizes?"

FIRST WINTER SPORT (*looking at a magnificent view of the Alps*). "Not bad, that."

SECOND WINTER SPORT. "Yes, it's all right; but you needn't rave about it like a bally poet."

Why this was I do not know. Others apparently no brighter than myself triumphantly surmounted the obstacles and became the centre of admiring throngs. But not I. And then, again, I was always one of the people who were sent out of the room. I never wanted to be sent out of the room, not even on the occasions when quite a lot of us went out in a kind of shuffling mob, and we had to wait about in the hall for some time, and come back all together jumping like fleas. I never jumped very hard. I used to come back at the tail end of the procession and execute very modest little jumps quite close to the door, so that I could get out again quickly before the people inside began to hiss at me. Sometimes I would scarcely trouble to come in at all when we went on to do " cheese," which was acted nearly in the same way as " fleas," except that we crawled without jumping instead of crawling first and jumping afterwards ; or " sneeze," which was very difficult to act at all, because it had to be done silently. That was the rule.

Still, there was nothing really terrible in going out of the room as a member of a large gang or herd. Now and again I used to make quite good suggestions

GILLIE (*at the stalker's fourth miss*). "No up to yere usual forrm the day."

STALKER. "No. Only just back from Africa. Elephants, you know. Can't see these beastly little things."

for dividing up some difficult word like " caustic " or " garbage " into two pieces, and first of all acting the two pieces separately and then acting the whole word at once ; and I would join in looting the house for hats and sticks and bells and shawls, and in taking coverlets off the beds and going to the pantry to find cups and trays. But when the half-word, which had taken nearly twenty-five minutes to rehearse, was being acted I sustained none of the principal rôles. Nor was I offended, as some of the cast were, that nobody tried very hard to guess what it was all about at the end, because the carriages had come and we were obliged to wrap up—carefully, dears—and go home.

The thing that I really detested was to be sent out of the room, the nice warm room, by myself. I had to come back blindfolded, walking backwards, and ask everyone a question in turn. When they answered, I had to guess what character in history they were thinking of, and whatever I said they burst into roars of ribald laughter at my foolish reply. I had to go on asking

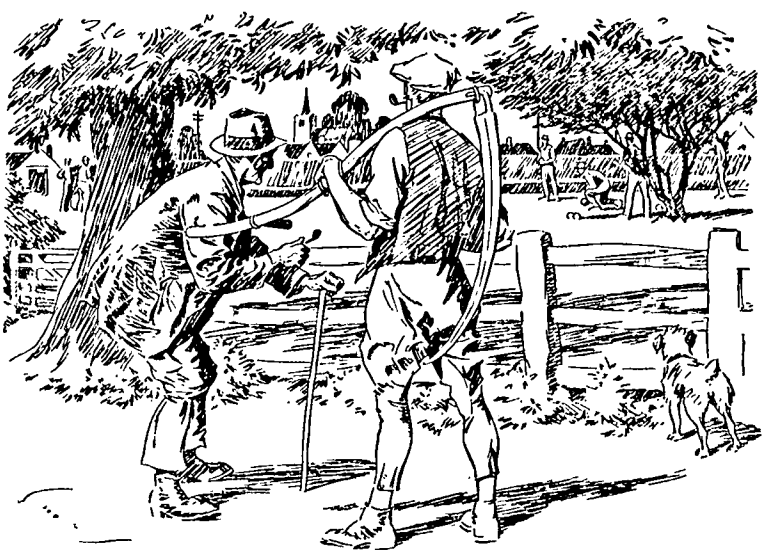
question after question until the savage blood-lust of my persecutors was glutted with the spectacle of my shame.

Now they tell me that the vogue for Victorian games is being revived. What sort of games, whether it is the quiet or the noisy kind, I do not know. But I suspect the worst. I am dining at " The Yews," near Woking, some time next week. I suspect we shall play Victorian games there. I am to be the guest of Colonel and Mrs. Murgatroyd, who like to do the latest thing, and we shall decide after dinner, I suppose, not to play bridge nor blame the Government nor compare motor-cars. Lady Gloop and Sir George Windlass are almost certain to be there. Canon and Mrs. Barker may be present also. I suspect that we shall have a lively round of " Consequences " and " Telegrams " first, and then, when all the adjectives and adverbs and pencils and pieces of paper have been exhausted, we shall settle down to something rather more noisy, like " Here am I to Torment you, Sir ! "

Have you ever played " Here am I to Torment you, Sir " ? It is played like this : The players form a circle, and the leader (let us say Colonel Murgatroyd) places himself in the centre. He begins by saying to one of the party (Sir

LITTLE MAN. "Could you oblige me, Sir, with a running commentary?"

PUNTER. "Tremendous field in this race."
LADY. "Yes. I've backed thirteen of them just to defy the superstition."



"Vurry old game it be; they do say as Drake used to play it 'board ship."

IRATE CAPTAIN (*to player, who has torn his opponent's jersey but failed to stop him*). "We don't want his lingerie, Sir—we want the ball."

"Why must they have a batsman at each end?"

"Well, you see, darling, they never know where the bowler's going to pitch his ball."

NOVICE (*who has been given a cast of three flies*). "I say—nothing on the end fly: is that all right?"

George Windlass ?), " Here am I to torment you, Sir," and receives by way of reply the question, " How do you think to torment me, Sir ? "

" With my finger and thumb," says the Colonel, at the same time snapping the middle finger and thumb of his right hand, which he continues to do throughout the game. Sir George (if it be he) will address in his turn the player on his right—Lady Gloop, I shall imagine—repeating the Colonel's question, but substituting " Ma'am " for " Sir " and snapping his finger and thumb likewise. And so we shall go on until the whole party is snapping its middle fingers and thumbs together. Our leader will then resume, " Here am I to torment you again."

CANON BARKER. " How, Sir ? "

COLONEL MURGATROYD. " With another finger and another thumb." He will then bring into play the thumb and middle finger of his *left* hand. Each player in succession will do the same. This done, he will continue : " Here am I to torment you, Sir, with two fingers, two thumbs and an elbow," jerking his right elbow backwards and forwards violently. The fourth time he will bring into play his *left* elbow ; the fifth time he will move up and down his right foot " with a pit-pat." The sixth time his *left* foot, " with

two pit-pats." After this he will give a " hitch-up," rising and sinking in his chair, and finally a " nid-nod," shaking his head up and down like a nodding mandarin.

Yes, I see Colonel Murgatroyd doing these things. I see us following him.

All of us by the end of the game will present a very pleasing spectacle of Victorian hilarity, with each limb in violent motion and exclaiming in unison, " With two fingers, two thumbs, two elbows, a hitch-up and a nid-nod ! " We shall be very happy indeed.

All that is, but I. I shall have failed to keep troth with the rhythm. I shall have incurred a forfeit. I shall be sent out of the room and told to come back on my hands and knees and bite an inch off a red-hot poker ; or to bow to the wittiest, kneel to the prettiest, and kiss the one that I love best.

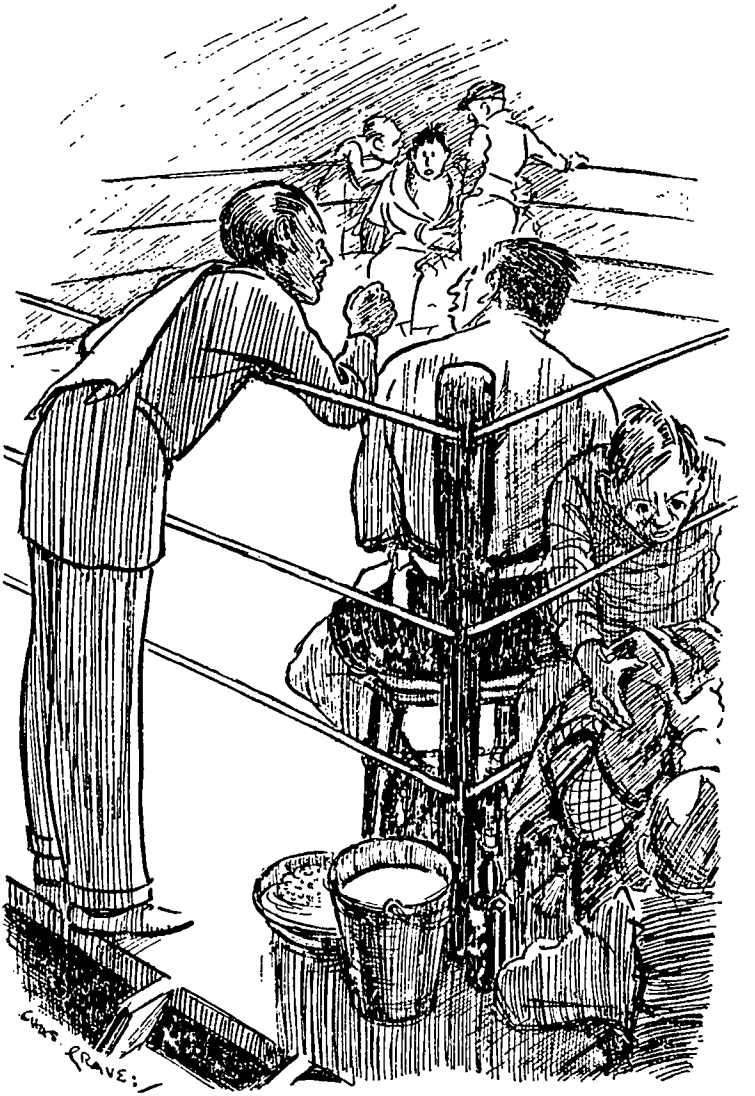
But I shall not do so. I shall not bow to Sir George Windlass. I shall not kneel at the feet of Mrs. Barker. I shall not kiss Lady Gloop. I shall open the front-door of " The Yews " and shut it as quietly as possible behind me. I shall take the first train home. I shall get out the patience cards and spend the rest of the evening playing Miss Milligan. And I shall cheat.

EVOE

SPORTING SQUIRE. "Think of it, man. I've had no shooting, and I haven't killed a fish. It's a dreadful thing to be stuck indoors."

NERVOUS CURATE. "Quite—and of course there's so little that one can kill indoors."

TIPSTER. "Nah, don't git nervous, you toffs; I ain't goin' ter preach. I wears this parson's bib 'cos I gotta weak chest."

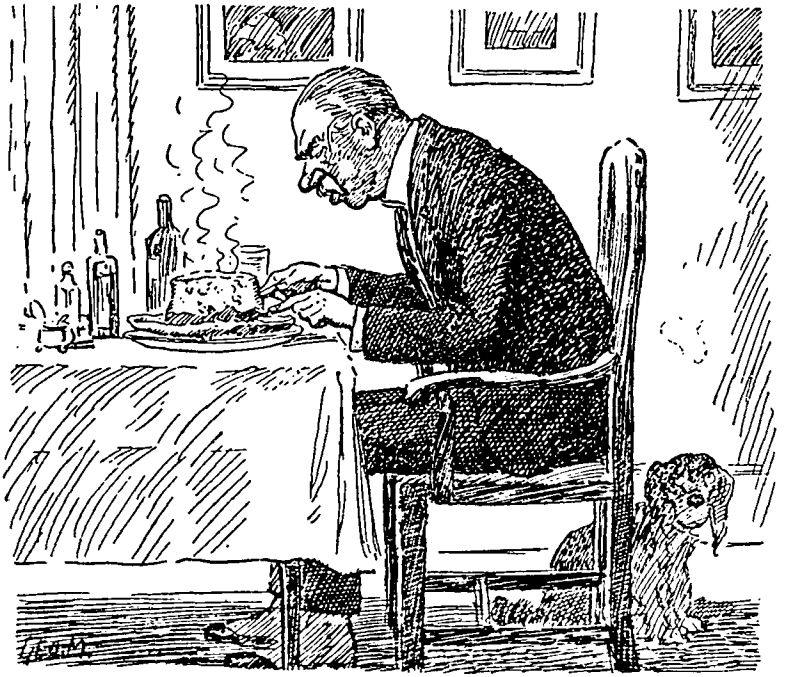


MODERN SECOND. "As he is obviously suffering from an inferiority complex, work on that to the best of your ability."

OLD-TIME PUGILIST. "Wouldn't it be quicker to give 'im a zonk on the jaw?"

"THE MAY-FLY IS UP!"
You need not be much of a fisherman to feel the thrill of this glorious festival.

INFORMATIVE FIELDER (*to batsman who seems inclined to weigh the situation*). "That's out, George."



Study of conscientious gentleman who said he would eat his hat if Épinard didn't win the Cambridgeshire.

Bridge Notes

The Presumptive Bid

THE Presumptive Bid is a measure of Bidding Reform. Like most reforms it does not re-fashion, but merely restores.

It restores to the Bid its original purpose, which has become obscured beneath a mass of conventions, restrictions and obstructions.

That purpose was, of course, to secure the declaration of the suit originally bid by the dealer. You wished to play the hand in Clubs, so you called " One Club," and your intention was clear. Call " One Club " to-day, however, and what happens ? Before you know where you are your partner has taken you into " No Trumps," opponents break out into major suits and in the clash of heavy artillery no one pays any regard to the little Club which fired the first shot. In the end you may live to see your cherished Clubs ruffed on the

POLICEMAN (*clearing the ground, to wonderfully-attired spectator*). "'Urry up, Sir, the bell's gone and it's time you got your pads on!"

EXASPERATED PARTNER. "Look here—don't you ever get your service into the right court?"
PARTNER. "No, as a matter of fact I don't. But it would be absolutely unplayable if I did."

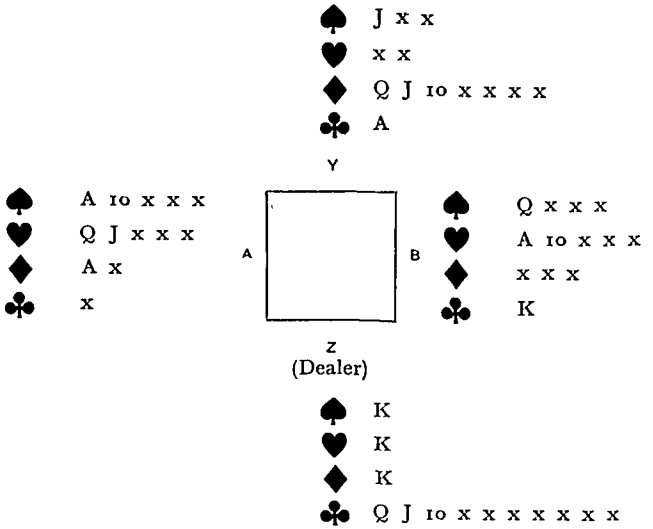
second round, or you may become dummy once again. Neither possibility is attractive.

Your remedy lies in the Presumptive Bid. It is the salvation of those whose bids mean what they say. It does away with all ambiguity and says quite plainly, "*I am going to play this hand.*" To succeed, it must be sufficiently high to prevent opponents from showing their strength or partner from showing his ignorance ; and the card distribution must be such as to warrant a high initial bid.

Hence lop-sided hands breed Presumptive Bids. For, patently, if you hold Long Clubs, your opponents may hold Long Spades ; and unless you wish to see your Clubs swept away in a spate of Spades you must rush in with a prepollent presumpt.

Your bid may prove to be far too high, but does that matter ? The point is that you have secured the declaration—snatched from under the very blades, so to speak, of Long Spades. The pupil-presumptor should remember this : If you presumpt, presumpt properly—*Bid Big.* You will have your failures—who has not ?—but you must not be discouraged ; the strangest presumpts prevail.

For example, consider the following deal, taken from recent play :—



Score : Love in rubber game.

Z dealt and considered his hand.

Now Z was a prodigious presumptor. When, as in the present case, his hand presented abnormal features, his bidding was apt to become tragic, insomuch as it inspired pity in his opponents and terror in his partner.

A multi-Club call ? Not Z ! Taking his cards and his courage in both hands he called " Five No-Trumps." All passed.

A led a small Spade, B put up the Queen and Z took the trick with his King. He then led the King of Diamonds, and A, thinking Z was trying to establish Dummy's Diamonds, held up his Ace. Z now led a small Club, trapping B's King under Dummy's Ace. From Dummy he led a small Heart. B, seeing Hearts so weak in Dummy and having no reason to suppose that his partner's small Club to the previous trick was a singleton, preferred not to play his Ace of Hearts on the first round, thus letting Z's King win the trick. Z then threw nine winning Clubs to make the Grand Slam.

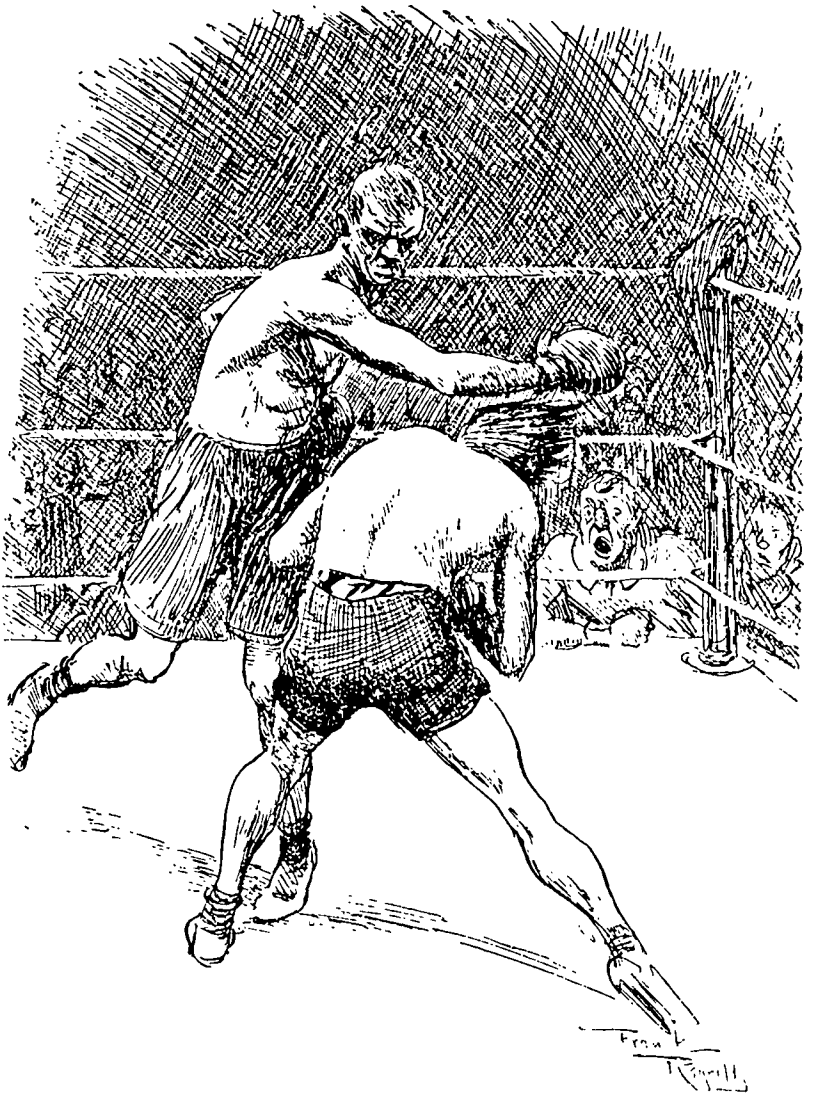
Your own presumpts may not always work out as happily as Z's, but it is hoped that his example will remain a beacon to light you on the road to Bigger and Better Bids.

December 17, 1930.

THE END OF AN IMPERFECT DAY
"One of those tins of salmon, please."

ANOTHER GLIMPSE OF THE OBVIOUS

TIPSTER. "I ain't one o' them blokes wot kids yer 'e knows everyfink. Now, I dessay the 'eadmaster of 'Arrer Collige knows one or two fings wot I don't."

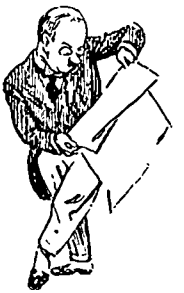


FRANTIC SECOND. "Don't shingle 'im, 'Arry—knock 'is 'ead orf!"

The Test at Home

The toss.

Off-drives.



Leg play.

A high catch.

A low one.

Fast bowling.

The googly stuff.

And a—

Sixer.

SPORTSMAN (*on left*). "It hardly seems right to be going to see a cricket-match while the rest of the world goes to work."

THE SAME. "Good gracious! Doesn't anybody work these days?"

HEAD GAMEKEEPER. "Now, Sir, you stand near this tree. You'll get a few birds and perhaps a hare or two, or mebbe a rabbit. But, anyhow, the postman passes here at four o'clock, when perhaps you wouldn't mind giving him this letter."

Patience

THE wise man going on a holiday, whatever else he may leave behind, will provide himself with Patience cards. They are useful at any odd time, and particularly valuable when he ought to be writing letters or happens to jib at the serious literature he has taken with him for study in his spare moments. They should be of medium size, not so small as to be a nuisance to handle—I have seen some like stamps—and not too large to be laid out comfortably on one's bed.

Patience is badly named. That is the one thing wrong with it. There are pastimes the devotees of which have the choice of cultivating patience under tribulation or becoming cracked. Diabolo, for instance, once popular —that was the devil's own business. Then there are jig-saw puzzles. I have seen a man labouring at a jig-saw puzzle suddenly rise up and with a well-directed kick under the table's stomach send the whole bag of tricks flying. What's more, I have done it myself; and I tell you it was a great moment. Patience is not like that. I remember one form that demanded the laying

out with nice exactness of two entire packs, and after doing that for a bit one did feel the need of a caddy. But in general its effect is bland and soothing.

It can be stimulating too, especially for a writer. After a lot of vain fishing for the right word the mere dealing out of the cards will often bring the elusive thing to the hook. And in time of sickness its action is gentle but lovely. Look at an invalid—a patient, one might say—propped up on his pillows and playing Patience on his little table, and you will note that he is wearing a sweet and patient—bother !—that he is wearing a sweet smile ; put him back and take away his cards and he will pretty soon start reflecting that he has jolly little to grin about. And to those serious persons who sneer at it as a waste of precious moments one need only say that Queen Victoria and Joseph Chamberlain were confirmed players. They were not renowned for idleness, nor, as a detail, were they given to throwing things about. John Roberts too, I believe, steadied his nerve by the exercise.

There must be hundreds of ways of playing, though I never met a man who had invented one. But it seems to be a provision of nature that the human system can hold only two kinds at a time—one for one pack and one for two—and that when a new form is taken on an old form goes. Some players have names for their favourites. But this is deceptive ; you will find that, though half-a-dozen people speak of, say, "The Demon," they

SWIMMING INSTRUCTOR. "No! no! no! ladies! Use yer legs vig'rous, yet graceful—like this 'ere!" (*January 20, 1909*)

TENNIS PROSPECTS

really mean as many different games, and where two people have one method each has his own name for it. Of course every rule has its exception. I am a member of a party of about a dozen men that assembles yearly for a fortnight. We are of varying ages, ways of life, points of view and incomes. Some are Scotsmen, an engaging but disputatious race. You would bet that there would be an occasional breeze, a sharp word at golf, an argument at bridge, a dispute on Free Trade. And you would lose. Our harmony is so lovely that the wives of the other members, when told of it, hold up their hands. Now it is a striking fact that we all play the same Patience. When two phenomena are connected one is pretty sure to be the result of the other. Plainly, it isn't our united agreeableness that makes us play the same Patience; it must therefore be the same Patience that makes us so unitedly agreeable. This is a great tribute both to Patience itself and to our particular form of it.

Shall I explain it? You take the cards and—— However, never mind.

The only maddening things about the game are the well-intended help of bystanders—an infernal nuisance it shares with others—and the habits of some packs. I remember doing a jig-saw puzzle at an hotel one wet afternoon. Two great American girls stood over me, one on each side. They knew the thing backwards, and as soon as I got interested in some corner a large white

THE STAR. "Of course one does not mind being defeated so long as the Press does not take one's defeat *too* calmly!"

BADLY-DEFEATED PUGILIST. " 'E's better than I thought 'e was. This 'as been a real eye-opener to me."

THE UNDEFEATABLE ANGLER (ONE OF THE BULLDOG BREED)

paw would appear in the air before my face bearing the piece I was looking for. I didn't even know the girls, and had to go for a long walk in the rain to restore my wonted calm.

For packs, they are queer things. Take my blue one. It is as intractable as a camel; it submits to being handled because it has to, but it won't help. When you want a queen you'd swear that the whole pack contained nothing higher than a beggarly lousy knave, look you. Now my pink cards are all that could be wished, amenable, decent. New cards seldom play well. Again, even the best packs, like putters and poets, get stale; the remedy for this is rest, as with poets and putters.

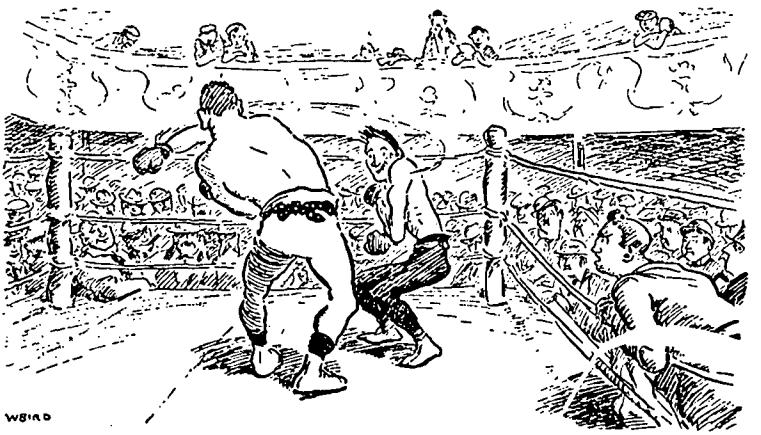
We come to cheating. This at cards is held in disfavour; others are interested, and there is money on the result. Even so it all depends. I know a man who sat down to piquet in one of our far-flung corners. His opponent put it to him squarely, "Shall we play fair," he asked as he shuffled the cards, "*or go as you please?*" My friend, realising that his education had been neglected, thought luck would do him better than skill. He chose fairness, and—mark the honesty of the fellow—his opponent stuck to it. But even for the purist Patience is not as other games. It is no contest with mortal adversaries or earthly forces. One is slap up against fate, and as fate doesn't give twopence for human ethics they work out as a lop-sided

EPICURE. "How's the game to-day, waiter?"
WAITER (*absently*). "The Villa 'ave won again, Sir."

business. Mind you, I don't ask you to cheat. I merely suggest that when sometimes a slight adjustment is all that is needed to do a hostile fate in the eye—well, there you are. After all, Patience is hardly a game. It is about the only form of unarguable symmetry attainable by man. That and trying to get a whole kernel out of a new Brazil nut—if that is attainable.

It is sad to reflect that the name of the great inventor of Patience is lost to us. He has no memorial. Still, even without his name something might be done. It should be emblematic. I would suggest a statue representing a human figure seated on a monument, playing Patience, and smiling at grief.

DUM-DUM



SECOND (*to warrior, who has missed another right swing*). "What do you think you are? An electric fan?"

VISITING BATSMAN (*after putting another ball through a window*). "*That*'ll teach you to swank about your posh pavilion!"

VISITOR (*after looking for missing tennis-ball for half-an-hour*). "Oh, come on! let's play with five!"

DAUGHTER OF THE HOUSE. "How *can* we? It's the *new* one."

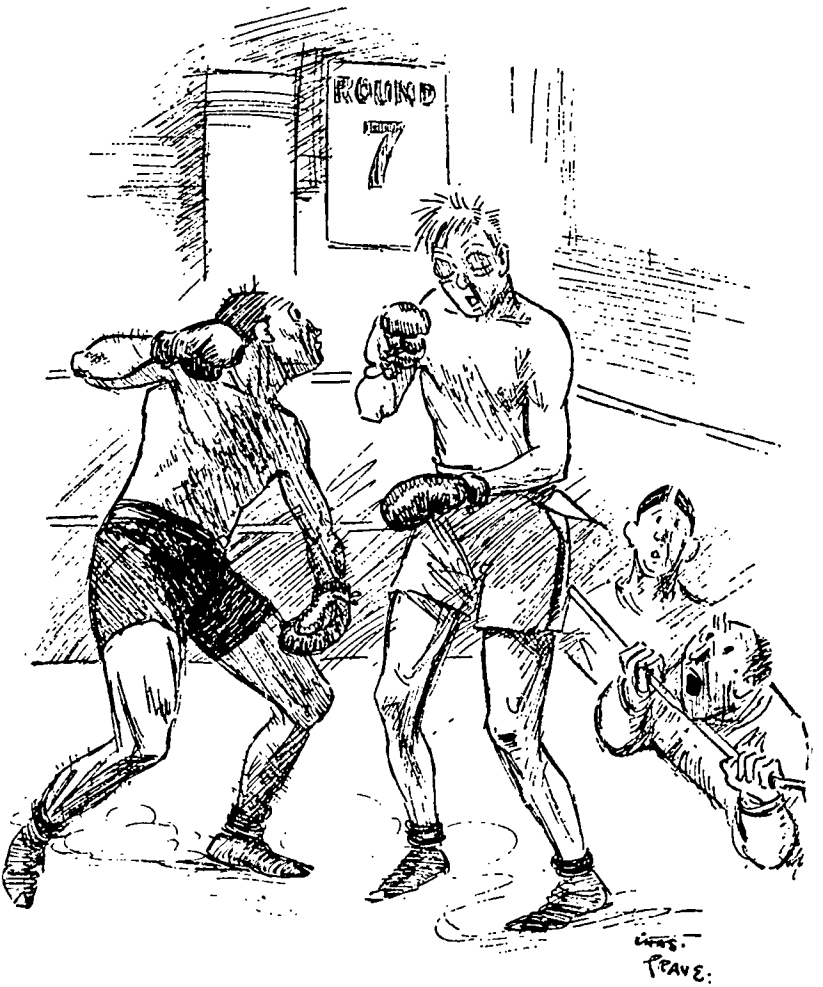
THE ENTHUSIASTS

During the recent frost (thanks, possibly, to the popularity, among poor dancers, of those restaurants where the floor-space is strictly confined) even the smallest pieces of ice have been freely utilised.

LUCK AT THE RACES

GIPSY. "Let me tell yer future, pretty gentleman."
PRETTY GENTLEMAN. "No! Clear out of it. I don't want to know my future."
GIPSY. "Then let me tell yer 'ideous past!"

MEEK VISITOR. "Any luck to-day?"
GRUFF ANGLER (*who has caught nothing*). "Yes, thanks! I had a capital breakfast of ham and eggs!"



SECOND. "Come on, Chawlie! If yer cawn't see 'im, 'it 'im from memory."

A visitor from Italy says that our women have lovely hands. Yes, but they simply *will* over-call them.

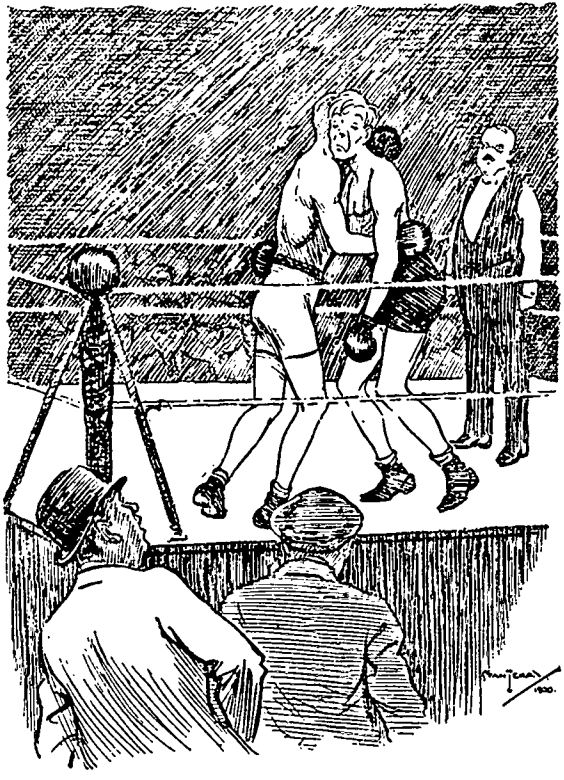
A veteran angler is reported as saying that girls cannot fish because they talk too much. They should wait, like men, till afterwards.

SECOND (*after tame round*). "Just look wot 'e's said about yer in this mornin's paper."

A card-player complains that we get too many of our bridge ideas from America. He doesn't believe in hands across the sea.

A girl has been seen with a tennis-racket in a West London church. Locally this is regarded as an indication of rain.

An earnest advocate of "Keep-to-the-Left" has his principle severely tested during a hill-climbing holiday.



BORED SPECTATOR. "'Ere, not so much of the ca-canny."

EARNEST TENNIS-PLAYER (*to useless partner*). "Perhaps I had better do the work."

PARTNER. "But I must do something."

EARNEST TENNIS-PLAYER. "Tell you what—I've got a rotten head for figures. What about keeping the score?"

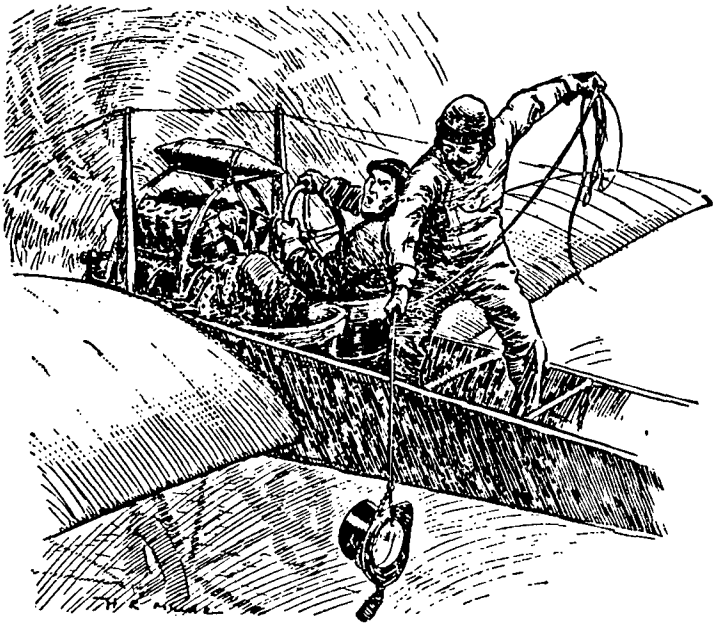
The Fluker's Farewell

I DO not play billiards myself, but as a student of psychology frequent the billiard-room at our club. We have no really first-class players; most of them are elderly and none gives evidence of that assiduous early practice which inspired Herbert Spencer's famous but seldom correctly quoted remark. When the officer ran out with his first break, the philosopher observed, "Moderate proficiency, Sir, I can respect and even admire, but skill such as yours is the sure sign of a misspent youth."

On the positive side, then, we have no great talent; negatively we are blessed with the absence of a marker. Markers are no doubt excellent people and possess all the domestic virtues; but they do not conduce to hilarity. Where the standard of play is low they perform their duties conscientiously, but with an air of depression and boredom. They seldom smile and generally suffer from colds, and in other ways show signs of low vitality. None of our players has ever expressed a desire that we should employ a marker. They

STALKER. "I doubt we canna go further; they'll get our wind."
EXHAUSTED SPORTSMAN. "Not *mine*."

ANGLER. "Hang it! Is there a dry spot in this boat where I can strike a match?"
BOATMAN (*who has been disappointed as regards refreshment*). "Try my throat, Sir!"



OUT OF THEIR RECKONING

PILOT. "Where are we?"
MECHANICIAN (*who is taking fog soundings*). "Piccadilly, I reckon!"

(*January 11, 1911*)

are humane men and disinclined to subject a club-servant to the torture of witnessing their incompetence without being able to say what he thinks of it.

Of all our performers the most temperamental is Wetherley. His name is appropriate because he is rather like an old sheep, though he is destitute of ovine equanimity. He never touched a cue till he was well on in the thirties, and now in the seventies he is one of the worst players I have ever seen, with lucid intervals in which he brings off shots that would do credit to a trick-player, so there is some justification for his historic remark, " It's a very strange thing that I never play up to my true form." But his actual form is sufficiently impressive. I once saw him attempt a red loser from balk, as the result of which his ball mounted the side cushion and ran all the way back to the middle pocket, into which it dropped. And he never turned a hair. He always plays too hard. You never can tell what will happen till the balls

stop rolling. His " strength," as a friend of his once said, " is as the strength of ten."

Wetherley's scores are almost entirely due to unearned increment, and his best breaks are generally preluded by a fluke. Indeed as a fluker he stands alone as the nightingale sings. What is more, he has come to regard flukes as his perquisite and never apologises for them.

Another of his great sayings was : " I don't mind missing easy shots ; what I *do* object to is missing my flukes."

And this leads me to the tragedy of our billiard-room—the final and apparently irrevocable decision of Wetherley to lay down his cue. He made the biggest break of his whole career a week ago—30—without a single fluke. After he had duly entered it in the score-book—his first appearance in that volume—he said in solemn tones, " Othello's occupation's gone," and has not entered the room since.

MR. PUNCH CHALLENGED BY THE COASTGUARD AT CAPE GRIS NEZ

"Have you anything to declare?"
"No—only that I have just swum the Channel."

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